



THE SANDMUTOPIAN GUARDIAN

Issue #22

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Spit and Pressure

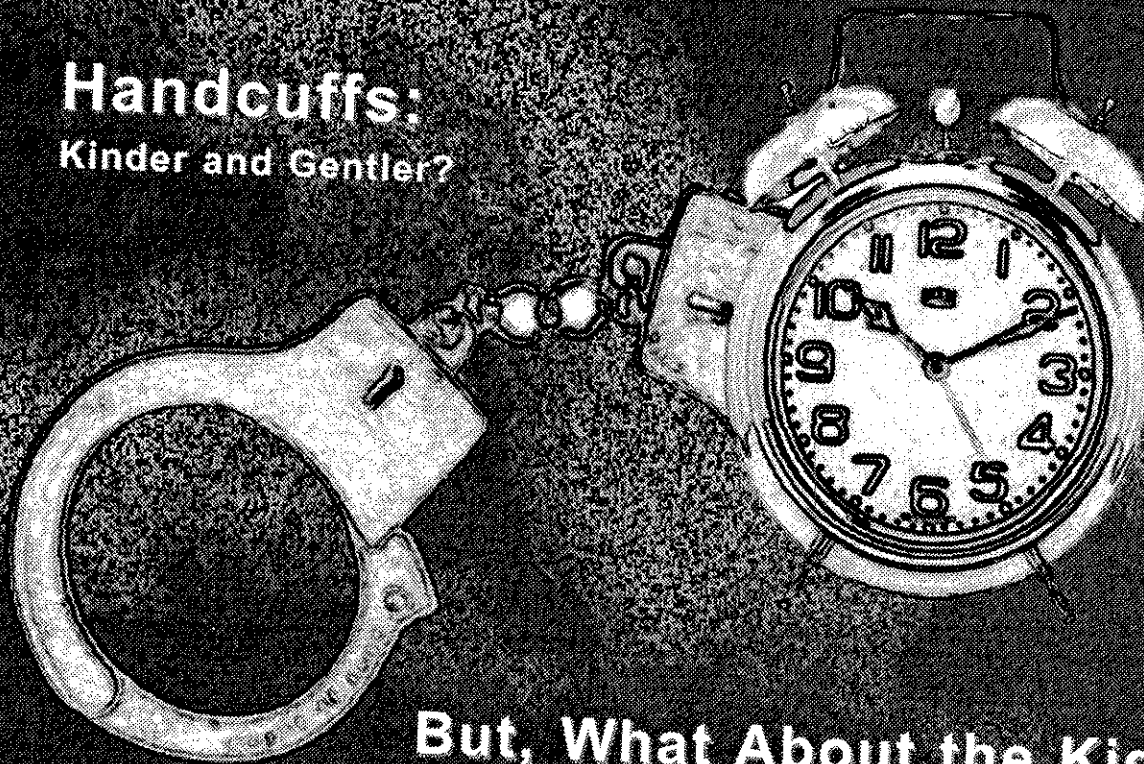
Shines Boots

Clinical Shock

Myth or Menace?

Handcuffs:

Kinder and Gentler?



But, What About the Kids?

BDSM for Parents

Paradigm of Submission:
When Knights Were ...



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Our Guardian Angels

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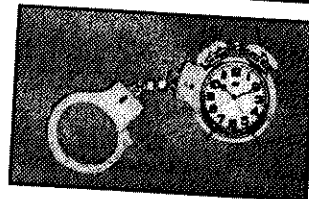
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ABOUT THE COVER:

In this issue, it's time for handcuffs: a **Book Review**, several **Smart Shopper** buys, the first entry in our search for the perfect suspension cuff, and instructions for making your own.



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Letters to the Editor

Our Readers' Forum

Send comments, queries or criticisms to: Editor, c/o The Utopian Network, PO Box 1146, New York, NY 10156 or FAX to (516) 842-7518. e-mail to siradam@ix.netcom.com. Name and address please, which will be held confidential.

...I'd also like to take the opportunity of saying that I think you produce a great magazine — I've read a couple of back issues as well, #18 and 19 — (from my club here in Oslo). "Playing with Your Food," and "Six of the Best" were memorable, but my absolute favourite was, "Playing with the Edge." It certainly conjured up some extraordinary images and exciting new possibilities for play scenes in my mind. Keep up the good work. With best wishes for your continued success of the magazine.

Patricia
Norway

I returned from the local video/book store with a copy of #20 and couldn't put it down. I literally read it from cover to cover. Good job!

Undoubtedly, the best, most informative publication of its type that I've read in years. We have been practitioners of the activity for thirty plus years and currently hold monthly rap

sessions on the subject in our area for the neophytes interested but tentative about reaching out to others in the lifestyle.

The only "glitch" I found was "From the Bookshelf" and the review of *Some Women* by Stephanie Locke. (She seems to say) that what makes this book so unusual is that never before in literary history has there been an anthology like this: women writing for women about their lives in S&M.

In 1982, while writing for a local publication with a very limited readership, I reviewed a book called, "Coming to Power," a collection of works by women that belong to a group called "Samois," who describe themselves as a group of feminist lesbians sharing a positive interest in sadomasochism. This anthology, whole written by and for lesbians, assuredly is no less valid for the heterosexual couple in either its content or concept. Obviously, no one can be

aware of all the publications out there, but for that reason I feel it would have been prudent of Ms Locke to avoid saying "Never in recorded history ..." Especially in this case, since Pat Califia wrote the intro to *Some Women*, she is mentioned in the review and was also a contributor to *Coming to Power*. Unfortunately, dumb as it sounds, many people feel that when someone writes a review, they represent themselves as an authority. They believe what is written, as though it were from "God," which in this case is incorrect. We just wanted to point out that while *Some Women* is undoubtedly (sic) very good, there are other major works out there as well.

Harvey
California

(Ed. Note: Pat Califia is also a former editor of *The Guardian*. *Samois* will be celebrating their 20th Anniversary next year. in San Francisco.)

Message

from The Publishers

This issue marks a kind of "anniversary" for us. It was a year ago that we published our first issue of *The Guardian*, #18. Since then, we have brought out four quarterly issues — on time! *The Guardian* is back! And here to stay! With that in mind, we are now offering two-year subscriptions at a reduced rate.

We are also adding a few new "touches." One of them is in **SMart Shopper**. Whenever possible, we will include the source and the price of the items we describe.

In each issue, we have added new writers, and new illustrators. It has been very gratifying to hear from so many people that care about *The Guardian* and want to see

it continue and succeed. Retailers too, are calling us to inquire how they can get the magazine into their stores.

Reviewers have remarked that one of the few weak points in our otherwise high-quality magazine, is the "dearth" of photos. That's partly because we don't publish "eye candy" for its own sake. We offer instead "brain food." And readers have told us that they read the magazine "from cover to cover," for the information, not the "bells and whistles."

When an article needs a photo or illustration to make it clearer to the reader, the picture will be there! But other articles are not "illuminated" by a photograph of a "babe" or a "hunk" having nothing to do with the subject at hand.

Gerrie & Mitch

From the Editor's Desk



The Houghton Case

Reader response to our support of the Houghton Defense Fund has not been positive. What has come back to us in phone, email and in-person conversations, has been expressed feelings ranging from, "having a few questions and concerns," to "having many doubts and suspicions."

What is the nature of the mistrust? Well, "some people" feel that the Houghton's defense team has not been, "open enough" with them. They, "take issue" with the fact that "Houghton" is an alias. They are "uneasy" that they have not been told which State or County is so SM-phobic that a lowly police lieutenant can manipulate the Department of Social Services, both the Family and Criminal Court's judges, and the District Attorney's Office so successfully with so little hard evidence! They "wonder" if an, "independent audit" will show that every penny collected actually goes where *they* think it should go.

Seriously? These are valid reasons for not giving? Think: Are mainstream charities held to anything near this standard of pure motive and fiscal accountability? Do they have to prove that they are as selfless as Santa Claus and that the beneficiaries of their largess are as pure as the Holy Family, and as likeable as the Brady Bunch.

The point of the Houghton Case is *not* that we should all get together to pay some strangers' legal bills. And though "Saving the Houghton Kids" has a warm and fuzzy appeal, it is not the main point either.

The point is that political cliché:
"Sending A Message."

An outpouring of contributions would show that there *is* an independent BDSM "Community" that mainstream politicians should respect and that other sexual minority Community leaders would want to support.

In 1990 it seemed reasonable for a panel of Gay Leather Activists to declare that, "straight people have no political issues of their own" and should therefore use what little political energy they do have, "to support Gay Leather." A Silent Majority of het folk in BDSM organizations has gone along with this proposition ever since. But, from the vantage point of this Editor's Desk and from the sales figures of our whip business, we know that a large and growing number of people, who are neither Gay nor organizationally connected, are doing exactly the things the Houghtons are being persecuted for. The Houghton Case ought to convince them that they *do* have issues, and that they *ARE* at risk.

The question is: will the "Kinky Straights" fight back?

For better or worse, the success of the Houghton fundraising drives will be perceived as a big part of the answer.

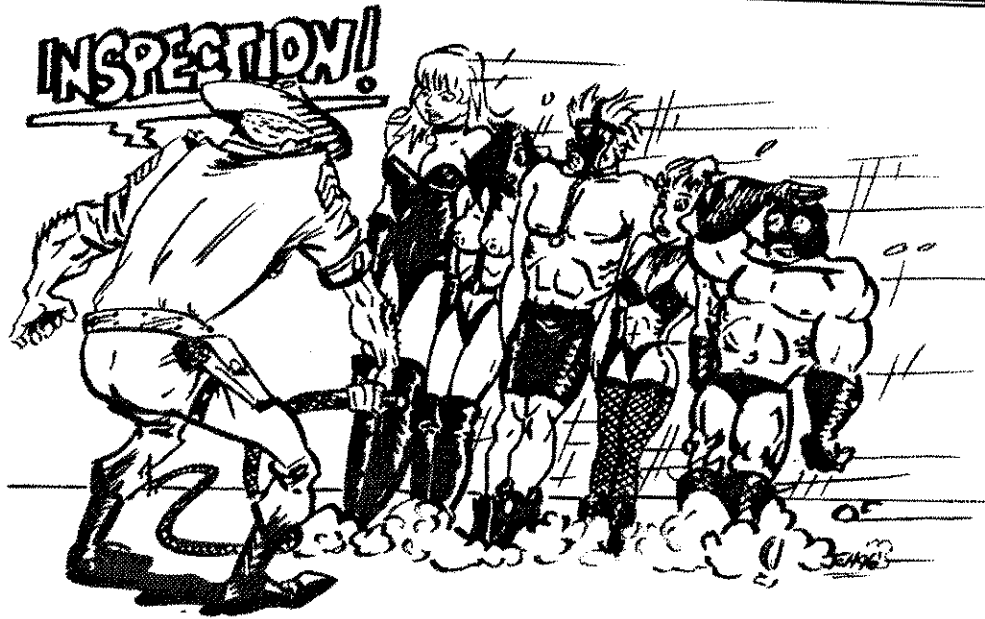
Mitch Kessler,
Editor and Publisher

What's your experience?

Have you had a bad encounter with the authorities in your home state because of your BDSM lifestyle?

If you have something to add to this discussion, write us here at **The Guardian**. A short response will appear in Letters to the Editor. A longer opinion piece may be one of our IMHO items on the last page.

HOW TO SPIT-SHINE YOUR LEATHER



A DRILL WITH "SGT. ROC CALLAHAN"

Now listen up maggots! It seems to me that there are a couple of you who don't want to have your leather products shine like Uncle Sam wants them to! Now I don't care if you're trying to shine your belts, whips, masks, boots, or whatever. From now on you'll shine them MY way and you'll make damn sure they SHINE! Here's the deal — PAY ATTENTION, Worm! — my name is Sgt. Calahan and I'll be instructing you in how to properly maintain and shine your leatherwear so well that your slaves will be able to see their pathetic little faces in them! And if you think you don't need some instructing, well tough! 'cause you're getting lessons anyway!

First thing you need to do is to pull out all of your scruffy, grungy, nasty leathers and get ready to sweat (or make your slave sweat — but if you truly take pride in your garments you'd do them yourself)! Next you need to gather your materials. Here's where you can make it or break it. Now you can go out there and get the cheap shit and

have stuff that looks all right OR you can go out and spend an extra dime or so and get the good stuff. What would that be? The same stuff that has been a staple in the dufflebags of U.S. GIs since it first came out — *Kiwi Boot Polish™*.

Now ole Sarge here wouldn't lie to you. *Kiwi* is the best stuff out there. (I've tried all the rest so don't bullshit me with how you know of some other way, just do as I say.) Next you'll need an old tee shirt (100% cotton) and a new pair of women's panty hose. Now all you kinky boys out there get yourselves two pairs — one to wear and one to work with! Only two more items: a toothbrush and some spit (don't use tap water, you need the enzymes in your saliva to actually help bond the polish as you buff it). The shine that you see isn't water (or spit), it's actually smooth, unblemished polish. As you shine your leather, watch how the *Kiwi* actually fills in and smoothes out the cracks and irregularities of the leather. *That's* the shine. Now I'll be as calm as I can with this but you better pay atten-

tion cause if I catch you loafing or turning the page before you're told I'll have your ass for lunch, and I'll take your slaves for my own! Understand me you lowlifes? I CAN'T HEAR YOU! That's better. Now on to your lesson in leather maintenance.

Got all your stuff? Good now let's get to it! First you must "wash down" your leather with the old tee shirt — *no water*, just elbow grease. (For simplicity we will assume that you are all polishing a pair of boots.) Whatever is really caked on that the tee won't take off, use your toothbrush and *scrub it off*. Again no water, just some effort. Once your boots are clean of all debris you're ready for the next step. Ready?

OK, this is step two. Don't let me catch you sleeping or slacking off now or you'll really be on my shitlist. Now, we shine. Open up your can of *Kiwi* (hope you got the big can cause you're gonna' need it). Take your toothbrush and scrub it into the polish — don't do it like a sissy! Get some *Kiwi* on that thing!

Good. Now apply it to your boots. Insert your non-dominant hand into the boot for support and scrub the polish on the instep first. There's a reason for this but you don't need to know that. That's not your job! Yours is to just do what I say, got it?

Once the polish is thoroughly applied to the instep, use your tee and in small circles (about the size of a quarter) rub in the polish. Don't expect an instant shine yet — that comes with work and time. All these circles should be counter-clockwise and should overlap each other slightly. This will insure an overall smoothness and limit your chances of missing any spots. You may need to repeat this process more than once in order to guarantee a proper shine. At this point all you are trying to accomplish is evenly applying polish to the boot.

Following the same procedures as you just did (toothbrush, then tee) apply polish evenly to the rest of the boot. Rule of thumb: the heel and toe will always shine quicker and with more luster than the sides because they don't move as much when you walk (they don't crease). Now do the same thing to the other boot.



When that's done, go get yourself a drink of water. (Spittin' time!) Is that water? I said WATER! (Any other drink will have impurities in it that when mixed with your saliva will actually work *against* you as you try to polish — not *with* you.)

Welcome back! I'm sure all you did what you were supposed to do. Well, now that your boots have an even coat of polish on them, it's time for you wimps to burn a few calories and shine. Do you have everything nearby? Good, because at this stage you don't want to have to keep looking all over for your tee, panty hose, or your *Kiwi* (and if you have to look for spit then there's something wrong with you).

Again, place your non-dominant hand into the boot for support. Now with your dominant hand (the tee should be around your pointer finger) Get a small amount of *Kiwi* and start to work it onto the instep of the boot. Like before, you want to use small "lazy" circles. Every now and then you should apply a little spit on the area that you are working. Don't be using up all your spit at once, just a little dab will do ya!

You should now start to notice a shine (not a spectacular one but nonetheless a noticeable one), you should also start to *see* where your circles are. Now we're sweatin'. (Richard Simmons eat your fucking heart out.) The more you work at one spot, the better the shine (common sense, right?)

Once you have completed the task of applying *Kiwi* and spit to the whole boot (don't expect to see yourself yet, and only the toe and heel to get an "exceptional" shine) go ahead and do the same to the other boot. Your boots are now shined,

but *NOT* to *MY STANDARDS!!* They still look like shit! Do you want to impress ole Callahan here? Get ready, 'cause you're gonna make 'em shine — I mean *really* shine!! Remember that pair of panty hose I told you to get? Go get them. NOW!

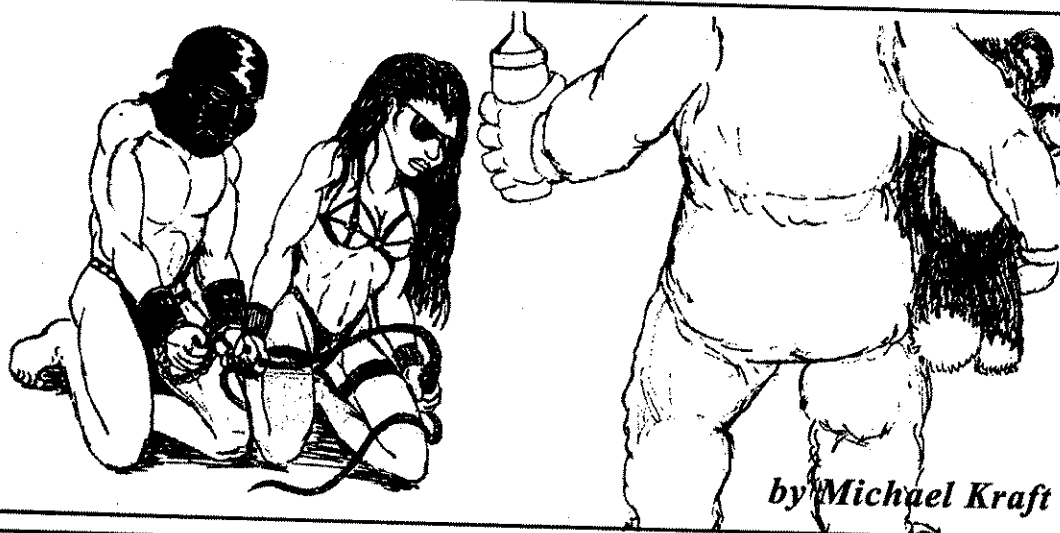
All right, now wedge the boot between your legs (brace it between your knees you perverts!) so that you can buff it. Hold the panty hose firmly with each hand about one foot apart.. Place the center of the panty hose over the toe and as you apply pressure downwards start to buff quickly back and forth; left to right. Again, the longer you do this and the longer in one place the better your end result. When you are satisfied with the toe, flip the boot over so that you can get to the heel. Redo the same procedure as you applied to the toe. Now the other boot.

Inspection time! How do they look? Think they would pass my rigorous inspection? Well, get in line and let's see. Good. Good. Good. Very good. Good. Good. What the hell's this? I can't see myself in these shit-kickers! You think you're going to impress anyone with boots like that? You better go right back and practice, practice, practice! The more care and attention you show your boots (and all your other leathers) the longer they'll last and the more fun you'll have watching your wormy little slaves grovel at your feet.

Good luck with your endeavors and the next time you put those boots on, or that vest, or whatever else, be proud!

("Sgt. Roc Calahan" is Justin Hunt, a former Sergeant in the elite US Army Airborne Division. He now lives in the Pocono Mts. of PA., but still exits aircraft without waiting for them to land! He will make his 500th parachute jump this year ... "sharing a 'chute with a buddy." When he is not illustrating or skydiving, he relaxes by rock-climbing or bull riding and hanging out with his two daughters. Justin has had work published in S&M News Female Dominance Forever, Slave! and Chained. You will be seeing more of him in The Guardian.)

KIDS IN THE HOUSE?



by Michael Kraft

You have kids, and you think that makes SM games impossible, huh? You can't let the kids find your toys, see your equipment, or, heaven forbid, see you during a play session.

Well, we love our kids too, and we have found ways to keep them safely out of our play. The result: we have a good SM lifestyle. You can too, if you think it through. In fact, with a few of the tips in this article, you may find your play becoming very regular and satisfying.

What do you need? Well, of course, you need a willing playpartner. You are also going to need some time to play, a safe space to play in, and perhaps, some equipment to use. Also, you may need an attitude adjustment.

Finding Time To Play

In order to play, you must have some time to play. Most parents are incredibly busy with child-related activities. Still, a few hours can usually be found, perhaps once a week, if you want to. Those few hours will feel like a mini-vacation, leaving you

refreshed and satisfied. You are going to have to plan or it won't happen.

Attitude Adjustment:

Don't Expect To Have It All

First, adjust your attitude about how much play you can have. We parents are different from non-parents.

... (playtime) will feel like a mini-vacation, leaving you refreshed and satisfied.

We have so little free time. The first thing to realize is that you can have a successful SM lifestyle, but it isn't going to be the same as those single friends and childless couples you have met in "the scene." You aren't going to be at every party. You aren't able to enjoy a play session at a moment's notice. Before you can play, you need to know that your kids are safe, happy and securely tucked away. This will take planning.

Setting a Schedule For Playtime

The easiest way to find time to play is to plan a regular schedule, and *stick to it*. We manage to play about 6 times each month. Some of our leather friends would be shocked.

They may play six times a week. Compared to them, we rarely play. Yet we are quite well known in our local scene, because we have mastered the skills necessary to play, while living in a household with kids.

Our personal schedule is based on a demanding professional career that keeps one of us at work most nights, including every other weekend. Your schedule might not be based on work. Instead, it might be based on something else, such as PTA meetings or girl scout activities. For those with kids from another marriage, your schedule might be set up to take advantage of those times when the kids are staying with the other parent.

Or it might be based on when certain babysitters are available for a sleepover.

However you decide the schedule, make it regular! Otherwise, we all know that your play sessions will get lost in the busy life you lead. Carve out a number of regular times each month that are reserved just for to play, and give your play a priority.

Define Your Roles

You probably assume many roles during your week. Each role has its own demands and rewards. The fantasy roles you use in SM are just as important as the roles of Mommy and Daddy, or your career roles. The problem spot is the transition from

one role to the other. If you have to do this only one time per session, it's bad enough. We parents often are forced to bounce back and forth several times during the transition period. That's hard!

However, when you consciously understand the different roles you play, and how they differ, you can more easily handle the mental gymnastics required to change back and forth several times. Examine your roles, understand them, and keep them separate in their proper places. You will be happier for it.

Play Without Guilt

We say that the most important relationship in our family is between mother and father. So long as we are happy, the kids are going to be happy too. We think of our play sessions as maintenance tune-ups for our continued happy relationship. Even if it seems that the kids make a small sacrifice a few times a month, in the long run, the kids are the big winners.

Even though the play is between Master and slavegirl, the benefits extend to Mommy and Daddy. The playtime is like a mini-vacation, and the results are a refreshed, and relaxed outlook on life.

What to do With the Kids During Playtime

What are the options here? Either the kids are in the house, or they are away. Each scenario presents different problems, and has different advantages.

Kids Away for Sleepover

With this option, you can play at home or away. If you go to a leather party or event, you can stay as late as you like, and sleep in the next morning. You can drop off the kids while you are dressed normally, and then drive back home to change into—or strip down to—your party outfit.

We generally drop off our two kids about 5 or 6 pm on Saturday and pick them up the next morning by 11 am or noon. The babysitter is happy

You can drop off the kids while you are dressed normally, and then drive back home to change

to give us a package deal, since most of the hours with the kids are sleeping hours.

Even if you do play at home, tell the babysitter that you will be out late. That way, you aren't likely to create a situation where the kids call the house at 9 pm wanting to come home. Kids are remarkably resilient, and once they realize they are stuck for the night, they'll be fine.

Of course, you will have to tell the babysitter how to reach you in a real emergency, but make sure it is understood that a call to you is *only* if you need to meet them at the emergency room. Believe me, the kids are going to be fine.

A sleepover makes it possible for you to play in your entire house, rather than just the room you reserve for dungeon play. You can also host an SM party. The guests can stay as long as they like.

While a sleepover does take more work to set up and plan, it greatly increases your freedom. You avoid the disruption of driving the babysitter home, so that you can continue to play in your own dungeon after a night out.

Kids at Home With a Babysitter

You can't always find a sleepover when you want to be out on the town. So you do what parents everywhere do: hire a teenager as a babysitter. This arrangement presents an entirely different set of problems and opportunities.

First, you may need to be careful about how you dress in front of the babysitter. It might be a bit much to leave the house in that all black, skimpy outfit, with the collar and leash. You may need to walk out of the house dressed in ordinary clothes.

Another drawback to using a babysitter is the ride home. After our night on the town, we generally want to come home and play in private for a little while longer. However, before we can continue our play, we have to jump back into the roles of Mommy and Daddy, figure out the payment for the babysitter, and drive her home. One of us is on the road, back in our mundane role.

Coming Out to Your Babysitter

How much should you let your babysitter know? Remember, the babysitter is a child too, most likely a

continued on page 44

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Full-Time and Long-Term 24/7 Relationships for the 90's

by Cecilia Tan

My aim here is to present some common pitfalls in building relationships and to provide points for further thought and personal exploration into the topic.

I've seen a great deal written about emotional safety and negotiation of scenes, but much "how-to" writing centers on a single encounter and not on longer-term circumstances.

Although I can certainly provide examples of relationships that are full time but not long-term (a week-long slave contract) or long-term but not full time (weekends-only), my main concern here will be with those relationships which are both — ongoing, every day, cohabiting kind of relationships.

When You Assume, You Know What You Make ...

We have one easily recognizable model for such relationships: the traditional heterosexual marriage. In some ways this parallels a master/slave relationship: each partner has a role to play, husband or wife, and promises, vows, and contracts are made. But, what does "to have and to hold" really mean? Is that a promise of sexual availability? How about "to obey" which is still in some wives' vows? Sounds suspiciously like an SM relationship to me. Where traditional marriage and a negotiated SM relationship ought to differ, initially, is in the assumption of the roles. Many marriages are based on shared cultural assumptions about what the roles of *husband* and *wife* are, for example, *husband* takes out the trash, mows the lawn, holds down a job. *wife* cooks, cleans, shops for food, maintains the household, accompanies husband to company parties. But what if the assumptions turn out to differ? What if one partner doesn't fit the traditional role the other partner envisions? In many vanilla mainstream marriages, partners marry under these assumptions without finding out that they have differing points of view. Things rapidly deteriorate from nuptial bliss to living hell.

The same pitfall awaits the ongoing SM relationship, if the individuals involved make differing assumptions about what it means to be in a Top/bottom relationship. I'll begin with general assumptions about the roles Top

and Bottom and about SM in general which may turn out not to be true.

Don't assume that:

Because you like SM you must have it as the basis of all your important relationships.

Because you and your partner play SM, *and* you are in a full time relationship (perhaps married), therefore you must be in SM full time.

All difficulties of day-to-day interaction can be solved through SM (punishment, orders, etc.).

All negotiation happens at the beginning, eliminating the need for continual updating of roles and rules.

All roles are an expression of the "true inner nature" of a person and are therefore static and will never change.

The Top is always the decision-maker or initiator.

The Top's needs always get first priority. (or vice versa!)

Dichotomies:

You Say Tomato, I Say ... Tomato ...

Even when we seem to have the same vocabulary at our disposal, we may have very different definitions of what words like master and slave mean; very different expectations of what each role will be.

Here is one stark dichotomy I call the "who washes whom?" test: In version one, the slave washes the master: prepares the master's or mistress' bath, with correct water temperature, suds, and soap, scrubs the top's back and feet and kneels dutifully by the tub with a dry towel at the ready. In version two, the master washes the slave: the top sees to it that slaves are groomed to perfection and prepared to the top's satisfaction, perhaps as an owner would groom a prized pet or a rider his or her horse.

Obviously, if the slave thinks it will be one way and the master thinks it will be the other, there will be conflict. In a one night encounter it may not matter but when it comes to needs being met in the long term, a difference of this type is going to result in dissatisfaction.

Here's another major sticking point stemming from differing points of view of what is "punishment?" What if

the Top thinks of "punishment" as inflicting pain and turns to spanking or caning, but the bottom *likes* to be spanked and caned...? This formula may work fine for a night of rough play. But in an ongoing relationship, how does the Top "punish" the bottom to reinforce the Top's will? If getting spanked is the best form of attention the bottom can wish for, perhaps the only "punishment" to dish out is to withhold the attention of the Top, deprive the bottom. The Top must modify his or her definitions and behavior.

Reconciling Roles

Part of the whole point of roles is for them to be comfortable. They give us a feeling of security and allow us to go through life feeling that we know what is expected of us. But in SM relationships it may take some time and fine tuning to settle into roles which work in the long term. If the most basic roles are Top and bottom, within each role there are many components that play a part. Tops may be a mixture of part sadist, part owner, part boss, caretaker, God/Goddess, initiator, decision-maker, and many more. Bottoms, likewise, may be some combination of masochist, prized possession/pet, rebellious instigator, captive, servant or slave.

Some of these role components are conducive to day-to-day interaction. Others, although they spark the libido and make for hot SM play, aren't as "user-friendly." Some specific dungeon roles can be adapted easily to day-to-day roles, while others are more of a stretch:

Smart Ass Masochist: A S.A.M. tends to be a willful, independent, capable person — someone who has a lot to offer as a partner. This is not a contradiction with choosing to give up control in the bedroom. The gift of this person's submission can be very touching and the basis of a deep bond, a very special brand of loyalty for the Top who is able to accept a bottom who is not necessarily obedient. But this type of bottom needs to realize the difference between being a brat and asserting opinions, and also between being rebellious and being lazy. A bottom who is constantly in need of supervision, correction, or motivation is not upholding his or her end of the partnership.

Drill Sergeant/Amazon/Unimpeachable Deity: If the Top is the type whose style depends upon inspiring fear, with bottoms cowering awestruck or afraid, it will be very difficult to maintain this every day. The Top must realize that if he or she relies upon too much mystique, that mystique is unlikely to survive living with someone. The Top may have to develop or discover other qualities within the style of mastery, and also choose carefully at what moments to reveal his or her awesome power.

Helpless Captive: This is a hot fantasy role, but how does this bottom expect to contribute to a partnership out of scene? It is no one's job to lie around looking pretty in chains all the time. Can the Pirate King keep the princess in his bed the entire voyage, or must she get out and swab the deck from time to time, or even become a member of

the crew?

Nursemaid/Caretaker Top: Call him or her super-Top: they always have everything scripted to the last detail, every need of the bottom anticipated, every contingency planned for, and their bottoms rave about what great scenes they've had. It's obvious how some traits are desirable in a partner: organized, supportive, considerate. But some caretakers are control-freaks in disguise. Tops who overplan are in danger of burning out if they feel they must keep up that level all the time. And their bottoms can become emotionally suffocated. Remember that the partnership is built by both partners' efforts and that the bottom contributes, too.

The Real Issue: Who Does the Dishes?

We've been speaking in terms of general emotional health, but we can delve deeper into the logistics of partnerships. Consider that all full-time relationships, whether they are vanilla marriages or life-long ownership bonds, have two main issues that must be worked out: division of labor and meeting emotional/erotic needs. We SM folk have a tendency to try to solve all problems through the framework of our SM interactions because this is the framework we have probably done the most discussing and negotiating over. But this is not necessarily going to succeed.

continued

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Division of labor is really about two things: making money and housework. Husband/wife norms have developed over years so that, for example, inside the house is her job (vacuuming, dusting, washing dishes) and outside the house is his job (mowing the law, raking the leaves, painting). But in an SM relationship, you will be defining your roles from scratch. You do not have to be constrained by previous examples or cultural assumptions necessarily. Think of the who-washes-whom test; most things can go either way, leaving you free to define labor and divide responsibility any way you like.

So how about that housework? You may think you have it made if your bottom is a houseboy or a French maid. But, will that really work? Or are they only interested in performing these tasks if master or mistress's stern eye and firm hand are applied? Their dungeon role may not necessarily translate to a day-to-day role. For many people it is difficult to actually get any housework done while "in scene." Housework may be an issue that you and your partner will decide is outside the scope of the SM component of your relationship. I repeat: we have a tendency to try to solve all problems in the relationship through the SM framework, but perhaps some things won't fit. Just because you decide to divide up the housework like vanilla housemates, roommates or domestic partners does not mean your SM relationship is not "real" or that it is flawed.

This becomes a larger issue for some people when issues of who-supports-whom come up. Very few people see a contradiction if the Top is the breadwinner, the bottom the "kept" party, because it fits with the stereotype and assumptions. But what if it is the other way around? What if the bottom is the one with the job, or the better paying job? Allow yourself to define things another way. Perhaps the bottom's work and earning is another form of tribute or service to the Top. Or perhaps the issue of earning and support needs to be separate from the SM component of your relationship.

But What About Sex?

I've saved the thorniest and most central issue for last. Getting erotic needs met can be tricky in any relationship, and it may be inextricable from the SM component of a relationship since, for so many of us, SM is integral to our sexuality. But consider first that for some people there will be times when SM needs and sexual needs will be distinct: there is a big difference between wanting to be beaten on the back and being horny. Another important point to consider is that not every person can simply articulate their "needs" like making a laundry list, and also that these needs change over time. For these reasons, one single SM framework may not be enough for an ongoing full-time relationship.

The classic dilemma is, of course, what happens when one partner wants to play or have sex and the other doesn't? Not tonight honey, I have a headache? SM may simplify things, or it may complicate them. Here are hard questions to consider, some of which I believe should be included in negotiations:

What happens if the bottom has a headache, or has to get up early in the morning, or what have you? In most SM contexts it is the bottom's "duty" to perform. It is a hot fantasy to be in a state of constant sexual readiness, but is it possible? How will a bottom's feelings of inadequacy or guilt affect a relationship when/if he or she does not meet such an expectation? A bottom may be eager to promise that he or she will never say no, but is it realistic or wise? If the bottom is reluctant, how should the bottom communicate this respectfully? Does it happen in or out of scene? Is there a protocol or must the bottom fall back on a safeword?

On the other side, what if the bottom is the horny, needy one? Is the bottom allowed to initiate a scene or sexual interest? Is s/he allowed to beg, for example? Or must it be discussed first, out of scene? What is proper? Is it part of this bottom's role to be constantly hungry for sex? Or is this bottom the more chaste type who must be "taken" or overcome by the Top? If so, how does s/he indicate his or her interest?

What about those times when one partner or another just wants to cuddle or have vanilla sex? Is it possible to compromise or are your roles too rigid to allow it? If you each have switchable tendencies, is there room in your framework to temporarily switch roles — the Top ordering the bottom to beat him or her, for example?

The answers to these questions will be unique to each partnership. Some of them won't be answerable in pre-negotiation; they will have to be discovered in practice. This is one reason not to assume that after the initial negotiation everything is set in stone. Negotiation is ongoing, the roles can be shaped as the participants learn and grow. If you plan to be together for a lifetime, growth and change will certainly occur! Remember that not every issue has to be an SM issue and that SM relationships, like all healthy relationships, are based on mutual respect.

(Cecilia Tan and her full-time, long-term cohabiting slave celebrate their fifth anniversary this year. Her essays can be found in magazines like Black Sheets as well as anthologies like Some Women and Bisexual Politics. She is better known for her erotic fiction which appears in Taste of Latex, Ms. Magazine, and anthologies such as No Other Tribute and Looking for Mr. Preston. She is also a publisher of erotic science fiction and travels around the country presenting seminars and readings.)

A Secret for Good SM

by Sir Michael

I know a secret for good SM. Basically, my wife and I have created three separate relationships within our life partnership. First is the relationship of Sir Michael and slave dina, our leather personas. That is how our SM friends know us.

Second, we are Mommy and Daddy, our parenting personas. Notice an interesting twist? Mommy comes first in this relationship.

Third, each of us has a professional career, with its own persona: The Lawyer and The Pharmacist.

Naming these separate personas was a critical step in our success story. In the early days of our marriage, before kids, we really didn't have personas. At work we acted professionally, but we always found time to sneak in some Master/slave play, sometimes even when we really shouldn't have. We were intoxicated by our intense relationship. It wasn't hard to juggle work and play then.

With the arrival of children, things changed dramatically. How could I continue to chain a naked slave girl to my bed when she needed to get up in the middle of the night, often several times, for a hungry infant screaming for her breast?

Mommy began to take over our private life. The slave girl became less available. Things weren't working. Everyone we knew was childless, and their only hobby was playing at BDSM. We wanted to play, too. Maybe we were a bit jealous.

Sometimes I would timidly approach my wife asking her to play with me as my slavegirl. I was *hoping* that she wouldn't be tired, wouldn't snap at me, wouldn't bite my head off, and wouldn't send me running with tail twixt my legs! Often, she did. We managed a little play during

this time, but it was never enough.

I was literally begging for her to be my slave. Not a good mental image for a Master! When we did get to play, it was often unsatisfying. Things just didn't click, as they had before the kids arrived. I couldn't flog right, or tie bondage right. I couldn't do anything right. We were stuck in the transition between vanilla and SM, and we were almost always out of sync. It was awful.

Then things began to get better. I recall first hearing about the concept of personas from a leather friend. She had a number of different personas, each with a distinct name. I remember thinking out loud, "How strange, to have these different names for different parts of her life." I didn't understand it because I wasn't ready to understand it. The names are important. They let you easily store the personas when you shift gears, and retrieve the personas when you are ready.

Gradually, almost unconsciously, we began to separate and name our personas. At first, I wasn't sure how many we had, but over time, it became clear that we needed only three.

Sir Michael is masterful, in charge, and *will* be obeyed. Daddy tries to laugh when the kids act like little brats, and helps to unload the dishwasher or do a few loads of laundry. Michael the attorney continues to listen to the sorry stories of his clients and fight for justice.

dina kneels obediently, ready to perform at the whim of her owner. Mommy takes charge and barks out orders to the family. Lisa the pharmacist is detail oriented, caring and very professional. She has saved more than one life at her hospitals over the years.

With the three personas named, it became easier to discuss issues because we had a much more clearly defined framework for discussion. We began to understand who was talking to whom.

We realized that the three per-

sonas had three different relationships, and it didn't work to mix up those relationships. For example, if Sir Michael were replaced by Daddy during a scene, it was a real scene killer. Imagine discussing household finances during a scene!

It was equally devastating when Sir Michael tried to play with Mommy during the day. What pleased dina the slavegirl, only made Mommy angry. With the three personas established, we had a tool to carve out our own happiness. It was much easier to leave Sir Michael and dina behind, with no regrets, as we performed the duties of Mommy and Daddy at home, or worked at our careers. And finally, all three personas are happy.

dina doesn't have a mortgage, or a job, or any politics. dina doesn't have laundry to do, or a dog to feed, or kids to dress before the school bus arrives. dina is free as a bird in her slavery. dina is happy.

Sir Michael loves to plan things but it isn't the planning involved in a lawsuit, or in rebuilding part of a rotten deck, or planning when to file the income taxes. Sir Michael needs to plan scenes, punishments, or excursions to leather events. Sir Michael has no deadlines. If dina doesn't get it right the first time, he is patient and will continue to beat it into her. Sir Michael has no worries. Sir Michael is happy.

Further, Mommy and Daddy are happy too — free of trying to juggle the pleasures of Sir Michael and dina against the responsibilities of parenthood. We are free to be better parents, knowing we can scratch that other itch at another time.

Before we had named our personas, life was confusing and often not fun. I think of those times as our wall of fire. We had to walk through it, and at times it was quite painful. But the other side has seen us blessed with a scene life nearly impervious to the problems of Mommy and Daddy, and bereft of the stresses of our professional careers.

Flexible

Tautness:

Why Rubber Men Love Their Fetish

by: Tim Brough, Editor
Rubber Rebel Magazine



It can be hard as armor plate. It can be spongy and soft like cloth padding. It can wrap around your body and hug as close as a reptilian second layer of skin. A good craftsman can fashion the finest of clothing from the widest variation of the same materials. It can be cheap; it can cost you plenty. It can make you feel hypermasculine, or it can make someone you wouldn't cast a second glance in everyday situations attractive as a superhero.

You probably thought I was talking about leather. I wasn't. I am referring to rubber.

Rubber holds an intense attraction for men whose fetish developed around it. As the editor of America's largest male rubberist magazine, I get letters on a weekly basis from men attempting to put their love for rubber into words. Some tell me stories of using their mother's dishwashing gloves to wrap around their dicks as youngsters. I've been sent stories about how men would sneak off to the barn or garage and masturbate while pressed against innertubes or tires. For many of us, it wasn't a learned behavior. There was just something about the old gasmask in the attic or that swing, or the first pair of shiny black buckling galoshes that first triggered an unexplainable segment of the brain, the one that sends cascades of hormones to the appropriate reactive body zone. But why? How does something as simple as a photo of men in diving suits trigger such an intensely private erotic response for so many people?

Rubber is like leather in many aspects where talk of the fetish reflex is concerned. Like most difficult-to-explain responses, you have to break it down to the five senses, which is what I'll try to do here. First and most obvious is:

Smell. There is nothing that can trigger the auto-response of a hardcore rubberman like the scent of a closet or cabinet filled with well-cleaned rubber. Good, high quality rubber will have its own sexual musk to it, and it's that reminder of what

**Just a tiny bit of lube
will provide you massage
for the entire evening and
you don't even have to
touch yourself.**

you're about to give yourself that can get a rubberman aroused. In the way a Thanksgiving dinner in the oven can set one to salivating, for many, rubber smells of sex. Couple that with many rubber fetishists' love of blue collar gear (hazardous material [hazmat] suits, electronic protection gear, firemen, aviators and the like) or athletic gear (sport team suits, pads and plates, surf or divewear), and there is the scent of men engaging in hyper-male activity. To find a vintage fire-jacket that still has the smell of smoke from the job embedded in the rubber will set many a man's eyes rolling. It's the smell of men doing what a "real man" does, and for many, an image to turn on to.

Sight: What could be more exciting than a man who has spent countless hours working his body into human sculpture flaunting himself for you? Dressing him in a manner that accentuates that effort. Rubber clothes do that for anyone! Even the most lenient of the physically fit can suddenly become a smooth, shining body of male muscle culture. Men who dream of being a superman can do that by buying a tight fitting, hot, shining, gleaming rubber tank top, fitting so close to the body that every move he makes follows the contours of the body. Gym bunny or no, a good piece of rubber brings out the look of your masculinity. A few hot pieces of gear will turn you into a man you imagine yourself to be, as well. You are no longer a mild-mannered accountant somewhere — you have become a fireman or a fighter pilot! To a greater extreme, many rubber/latex fetishists will collect enough gear to become a superhero. Rubber and latex comes in so many colors that it lends itself to those kind of visuals. I know of several men who have comic book hero fantasies and have worked meticulously to create a perfect Batman outfit or a coordinated Mighty Morphin' Power Ranger suit. Rubber is much more flexible than leather when it comes to hyper-male image projection.

So you've put on the tightest rubber pants and T-shirt you own, you've covered it with a gritty coverall you bought secondhand after knowing that it was used on the streets of the city by some hot-looking and male-smelling, gritty, tough cigar-smoking DWP forklift operator. You're at the

top of your game and you're going to find someone who will respond to your ideal. But how does it feel?

Those tight rubber pants never stop touching you, and neither will your shirt. Rubber can cocoon you in a manner that no other material can even approximate. Sexually, it becomes not what you take off, but how much you have on. Just a tiny bit of lube will provide you massage for the entire evening and you don't even have to touch yourself. Your body supplies the vibrations. For a rubber fetishist, rubber can give you the kind of feel desired to trigger the reaction you know you want. Be it the sweaty massage that long-term latex wearing will bring to the heavy, encompassing wrap that seven or eight layers of suiting will deliver to a scene, gear can present it all to you. Heat, danger, enlightenment, deprivation, submission, domination ... rubber in any combination permits its fanatics to have it all. You feel like your own man when you put on your favorite gear and suit up for the day's activities ... or get someone else suited up and ready for an evening's gaming.

Touch: There's another aspect to the feel of rubber. To a touch-sensitive body: a tight rubber garment will "spread" the touch against it. Because of the flexibility of rubber, once it clings to your body, a rub against it will reverberate along your flesh underneath. Should you and a partner be pressing or feeling on each other, imagine how the fingers stroking against your back would feel if the spreading waves from the rubber were moving all along your spine and not just stopping at your partner's fingertips. Should your scene move into kinkier realms of bondage or sensory deprivation, a rubber hood over the head sends trippy sweeping sensations around the head as it is stroked. A blindfold removes all but the pressures of those touches and the waves of pleasure/torment that you're striving for. Because of rubber's flexible tautness, a man drawn up inside a sleepsack or mummified in those deliciously scented rubber straps can push and stretch for all he's worth, but as the rubber slacklessly returns to its given shape and the bottom remains trapped inside, his bindings contoured to his body and as unfor-

giving as a second skin, rubber again provides a sensual trigger that is unlike any other source material. With rubber outfits of different styles, the or severity of a blow varies as well. Imagine a bondage scene where the chest or shoulders of your intended target are protected enough that the pounding of chains against his body will do no more than bounce away with a loud thud and a man inside submitting to your blows!

Sound is the easier to explain because of the way we are used to defining sounds we enjoy (or at least recognize). When rubber is struck, it has a wonderfully unique snapping sound, or a certain kind of smack that cloth of any variety can't replicate. A rubber-covered body becomes a bizarre form of human percussion instrument because of this feature. The sound of a hand being pulled along a tightly stretched, slick, rubberized body will drive any rubberman into a Pavlovian state of drooling, again being inside that rubber as it is being "sounded" can drive you to fits! Not just because of the sound itself, but from the combinations. The noise as it conveys the coming excitement, the feel as it moves along the body (should you be wearing a hood, this pairing is rubber ecstasy), and the smell as heat and excitement builds rubber and sweat to inflammatory levels. The kind of rubber used can also make a difference in the sound; thick neoprene, because of its spongy nature has a sound all its own.

Taste is probably harder to define. I have a friend whose rubber boot fetish is so deeply ingrained that he can tell you which brand of boots are in his mouth ... just by chewing on the rims. There are many men who do not consider a scene complete unless a

rubber-gloved thumb is shoved in his mouth ... or better yet, a thick latex dildo or rubber ball gag. For these rubberists, it's just as much the completeness of the rubber coverage. All the cavities of the body are touched by rubber, inside and out, that bring these extremes to the forefront of their rubber desires. Their ass is plugged with rubber, a lubed sheath covers their cock and balls, rubber has entered their mouths, their hands are gloved with heavy industrial gloves, boots ride high on their legs, a gas mask covers the face. For a rubber fetishist, it hardly becomes a question of "why." It becomes the answer to "how" ... how to bring back that feeling of power, how to gain control of my image for just this moment, how to derive the greatest sensation of pleasure. Yet most rubberists, like just about any fetishist, would be hard-pressed to give you a ready analysis of what rubber really does for them. So your best bet, if you've had a rubber interest or if you just have the curiosity, is not to try to define it, but to just enjoy what it brings to you and where the resulting exploration will take you.

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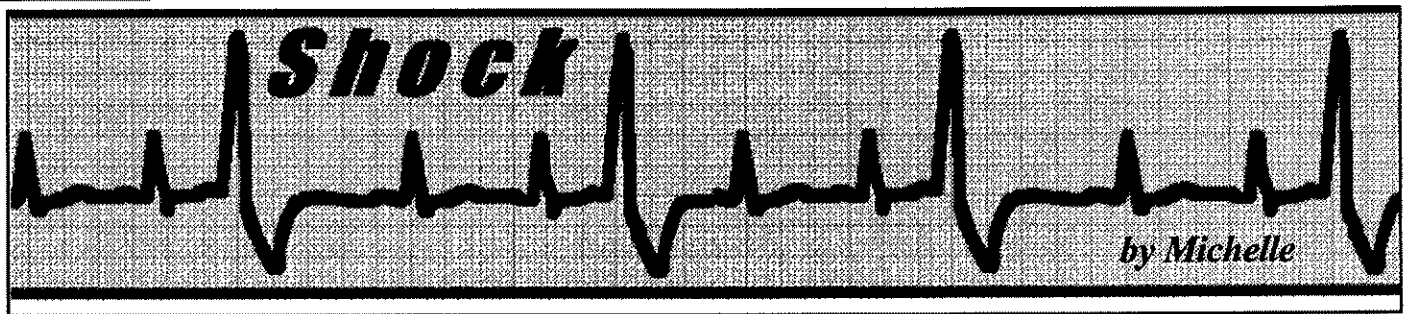
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PHOTO: DIDIER BURIEZ, MODEL: JIM LANDOLPHI, A.D.: MERRILL SELDES



The scene is almost over. The top has flogged a nice background layer of welts and bruises on the bottom's back and is proceeding to finish her with a single tail. As the top releases her from the standing frame, they collapse together for some pleasant after-care.

A few minutes later, shivering, the bottom says she is "in shock" and needs some juice. Several people around her panic and rush to help. Does she need medical help at that point? What does her saying that she is in shock mean?

Many people talk about experiencing shock in an S/M context without being able to explain what shock is. The purpose of this article is to explain the definition and applications of "clinical shock." It will explain how it relates to that "shocky" feeling many people experience post-scene and it will tell how to identify your level of risk and move it to a comfortable level for you.

Clinical Shock

Clinical shock is the metabolic shutdown state which occurs due to an inadequate perfusion of the tissues: the individual cells of the body are not getting enough blood flow to derive the necessary oxygen. There are five basic types of shock distinguished by their cause of the circulatory failure. The most common type of shock is **hypovolemic**, resulting from low blood volume either from trauma (bleeding) or dehydration. **Septic shock** is a result of bacterial infection. **Anaphylactic shock** is a result of a strong histamine (allergic) reaction. **Cardiogenic shock** results from an injury to the heart, be it mechanical or chemical. **Neurogenic shock** results from an injury to the central nervous system. The brain has gone "haywire" and is telling the body to do wrong things. If it tells the body to do enough wrong things, the body ceases to function. Psychological shock is the subcategory of neurogenic shock relevant to S/M play.

Endorphin Release

Endorphins are produced as a result of stress. In scene, they are usually released due to the *emotional* reaction of

the scene — *not* the *physical* sensations, although the emotional reactions are frequently a result of the physical sensation. One could get this reaction without any physical sensation at all. The general purpose of terror scenes (or rollercoasters) or any number of other mind games is to produce this reaction.

That "Shocky Feeling"

Many people state that they are "in shock" at the end of a scene. The shocky feeling that they speak of is *not* clinical shock. It is a precursor which could potentially become clinical shock but the chances of that occurring are extremely remote. The person may be anxious, pale, and shaky. They may even feel lightheaded and dizzy, but **unless they also have a significant drop in blood pressure** they have not crossed the critical threshold into shock. Be aware though, that the shocky feeling itself may have long effects. The person's endorphin levels are still high after the scene is long over and he or she may feel unwell and disjointed the next day or so as the neural transmitter levels return to normal. This may be something you wish to avoid. It is also the exact effect some people seek out.

Psychological shock
is the subcategory
of neurogenic shock
relevant to
S/M play.

Treatments for the Shocky Feeling

There are ways to minimize that shocky feeling and to minimize the possibility of crossing over into clinical shock. Treatment of any type of shock begins the same way: removal of the injury. As our consulting physician says, "It doesn't matter if the insult is a crowbar through the brain or repeatedly telling a certain bottom that she's dog shit." First, stop before the person passes out. Most people who pass out in scenes not involving direct breath control do so because of hyperventilation. They start hyperventilating the same as one may with a panic attack. The emotions become so strong that breathing regulators go on overdrive. If breathing is not brought back under control, the person will pass out.

Secondly, take-down is important in minimizing that shocky feeling. Lie the person down. Lowering the level of the heart reduces the risk of fainting. Keep the person warm. The endorphins are running around lowering peripheral circulation and allowing the extremities to become cold. Physical contact may help the person regain

The body has several defense mechanisms in place to prevent psychological shock from occurring.

a sense of equilibrium or it may exacerbate the effect if the person still feels threatened. The most important part of take-down is helping the person relax to let the mind slow down and re-enter reality.

There is a greater risk of progressing from the shocky feeling that many people want, into the dangerous clinical shock with people who are strongly emotionally reactive. Since it is the endorphin level which dictates the crossover and the emotions prompt the endorphin release, the stronger and more out of control the emotions are, the more likely it is that the endorphin levels will be out of control. Even with this increased risk, the odds of clinical shock occurring in scene are remarkably low.

Defenses

The body has several defense mechanisms in place to prevent psychological shock from occurring. The first defense is the **fight or flight** instinct. The bottom becomes anxious or afraid. The pulse may quicken, the breathing changes in quality and all the senses become more acute. It is as though they were an animal in the wild trying to avoid a predator. They may choose to fight, to struggle through the scene, or to become mentally or physically combative. Bottoms have been known to try to topple equipment in an attempt to end the scene at that point. They may choose flight, in the form of a safeword, a mantra or other internal defenses. This first line of defense is generally sufficient. Most scenes end while the bottom is still somewhere in this category.

The second line of defense is **disassociation**. The person feels like he or she is no longer connected to what is happening to the body and that s/he is watching everything happen to someone else. If the process continues, the person may go catatonic. Catatonia is the mind's equivalent to passing out. The person ceases acknowledging or reacting to stimuli. The mind has shut down. The mental stress necessary to cause a person to disassociate is tremendous. Typically limits, either the top's or the bottom's are reached on some other front before that level of stress is achieved. Some people will hyperventilate and pass out before they reach this level of stress and thus avoid either dissociation or catatonia. If this second line of defense fails, the person may go into clinical shock..

Psychological Shock

Clinical shock, when it occurs, is the result of excessive amounts of catecholamines in the blood system. Catacholemines are neural transmitters, those nice little endorphins (epinephrine and norepinephrine) that we encourage in-scene, for the most part. Psychological shock occurs when the level of these neural transmitters is extremely high, so high that the defense mechanism they were designed to set up collapses in on itself and causes a

self-perpetuating cycle. Even with direct and immediate medical intervention, this cycle is frequently irreversible. The high levels of epinephrine in the blood increase myocardial irritability with the accompanying hazards of ventricular arrhythmias. (In other words, the hormones agitate the heart and may cause it to beat irregularly and ineffectually.) The electrical system of the heart malfunctions. The person in this very rare instance may become so scared that they have a heart attack and die.

How to Tell If It's Clinical Shock

How do you know if you have crossed the line into clinical shock? Well, unfortunately, "No objective repeatable criteria exist that make it possible in practice to guess the very moment when transition occurs from [the shocky feeling] to irreversible shock." [Dr. Iuliu Sutut, Shock: Pathology, Metabolism, Shock Cell Treatment.] However, there are some signs that will tell you after the fact that you have crossed the line and it is time to dial 911. The first clinical sign that may be looked for, if you are concerned the person may be in shock, is to check the pulse. Assuming the person is still conscious at this point, you should be able to find the pulse with relative ease. The quality of the pulse is more important than the rate. You should feel a strong, solid beat. If the pulse is "thready," weak and rapid, it is a sign that the physical state has deteriorated to the point where medical attention is necessary.

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A word of caution though. When checking the pulse, be careful not to use too much pressure which can occlude the artery and give an inaccurate result. If you think the pulse is thready, I recommend rechecking at the carotid artery which is the pulse point on the neck.

If the person goes unconscious and is unarousable, you have crossed the line. If the person passes out due to hyperventilation, he or she will come around quickly and spontaneously. If the person has not regained consciousness within approximately one minute, smelling salts are in order. If you have a blood pressure cuff and know how to use it, check the pressure. There are commercially available blood pressure devices which can be used reasonably accurately with no medical training. One model I have seen attaches to the wrist and costs approximately one hundred dollars. If the blood pressure is 90/50 or below, it is time to call in the emergency medical personnel. Also if the smelling salts do not work it is time to call in help. Time has just become your enemy.

While the consequences are drastic if the person deteriorates this far, the chance of it happening is remarkably low. In fact, the odds are so low that a significant part of the medical community denies the possibility that shock exists in this context. And those medical professionals who acknowledge it, all agree that it is *exceedingly rare*.

Amnesty International list unconsciousness and psychosis as the most extreme results of psychological torture, not heart attack or death. That is because the factors which must combine and the degree to which they must be present are such that getting all elements together in one individual at the same time is remarkably difficult. A person who is more emotionally reactive than most and thus has more endorphins running around is also more likely to pass out from hyperventilating and short-circuit the cycle. If nonconsensual torture does not frequently cause unwanted death from shock, it is unlikely that scening in the modern consensual context would. In fact, death from shock is so rare, there are no documented cases of it occurring.

Minimizing Your Risk

Because the odds of clinical shock and/or heart failure are so low, many people may choose to play with the severe psychological distress and take the risks involved. There are ways to minimize the risk and limit your partner's discomfort while still playing with the emotions at that level of distress. First, pause at the point where the individual has lost touch with reality or the point at which there is a loss of immediate consent (active and conscious agreement). Help the person to refocus, calm down and be drawn into reality again. If the person is able to get back in touch with reality sufficiently to reestablish immediate consent, it is almost certainly safe to proceed. However, if you are trying to reproduce an interrogation scene, the lost contact with reality may be crucial to the scene's success and worth the minimal risk.

... the odds are so low, that a significant part of the medical community denies the possibility that shock exists in this context.

Another method of lessening the risk is to stop before the individual passes out. While this is a nice concept, it has similar problems to pregnancy prevention by premature withdrawal. Some people give clear signals that they are losing consciousness, but with others it is a quick transition. If the person does pass out and regains consciousness, allowing them to recover fully before taking them back to a heightened state of terror is recommended, preferably overnight, although that is not absolutely necessary. If the person is taken back to that level without having had time to recover fully, there may be a cumulative effect since the neural transmitter levels have not had time to return to their normal state. As discussed earlier, catatonia is a defense mechanism designed to prevent shock. Repeatedly taking the individual to a catatonic state will not cause the same physical aftereffects of shock-induced unconsciousness. However, it may leave permanent mental and emotional scarring. Knowing how the bottom's mind works and what reactions look like at different levels of agitation is the best tool to use to play the line but not cross it. With a regular play partner, discussions after the scene to see what they are feeling may help you correlate what you saw with their mental state and find the line more accurately.

Bottom Line

Each person ultimately chooses the level of play that is safe enough for him or her. It is the mental and emotional state of the bottom, not the physical activities occurring at the time, which are the determining factors. Most scenes will stop when the emotional/mental stress becomes enough that the bottom safewords, long before there is any substantial risk. Most mind games don't reach the level of disassociation or catatonia, much less go past them. By far the largest problem with mind games is the mental and emotional damage which occurs long before shock is induced. Clinical psychological shock is sufficiently rare that one is more likely to get struck by lightning watching a golf event, than to enter shock as a result of a scene.

(Michelle is a 24/7 owned servant and daddy's girl who is also a Certified Nurse's Assistant and an Emergency Medical Technician.)



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Lotions, Potions and Powders

by J. MacMillan



Not every item in your arsenal must come from the local BDSM emporium. Much fun and experimentation can be had with items purchased in the pharmacy and the grocery store.

Below are some general guidelines and enough information to get you started using topicals (anything applied externally to the skin). As always, use common sense when you are trying something new in a scene. If it doesn't seem like a good idea, it probably isn't. If you really aren't sure about how something will work out, talk about it beforehand. Not all surprises are welcome ones.

Topicals are a superb way to enhance and build a BDSM relationship, but to be effective and satisfying, you need to be well-versed in your partner's responses and able to quickly respond to any unforeseen reactions. Everyone's skin is different. I used to play with a bottom who was not sensitive to most items but did develop a rash when canned whipped cream was used. Go figure. The bottom line (all puns intended) is that you can never be sure of a skin reaction. If your bottom has particularly sensitive skin in general, (marks easily, breaks out easily) you should try a test patch. If you want the new experience to be a surprise, do the test during a different scene or even out of scene.

The best location for a test patch is on the inside of the forearm a few inches above the wrist. The skin there is fairly delicate and if there is going to be a reaction it can be explained as brushing up against something or having been attacked by a cologne tester in a department store. Wait at least an hour and look for redness or inflammation. This spot is also easily exposed to air which helps healing in case of an adverse reaction. A topical that produces a mild tingle on one person's skin may blister the skin of another.

Go slowly. Don't try too many unknown substances at once so that you have a way to determine what might be causing a reaction. I think it's a good idea to have some sense of what's being felt. If it's too strong for the relatively thick skin of your hands it's probably too strong for the very delicate skin to which you are applying it. If you don't wish to experience any of the sensation, wear latex gloves while working with topicals.

Even if your bottom has "tough" skin, it is always a

good idea to have a means of removal or dilution close at hand, particularly if the bottom is restrained: liquid soap and a bowl of water with a washcloth is enough. If you need a more portable solution, a bottle of witch hazel or other astringent is good for removing oil-based topicals; also available (but on the pricey side) are non-soap lotion cleansers which don't require a water rinse.

Sensation is greatly affected by which part of the skin is treated. Skin that is exposed daily is less sensitive than skin that is usually covered. Mucous membranes (the smooth skin of the recto-genital area, inside of the mouth and nose) are the most sensitive and should be treated with care. While most of the items discussed here can be applied in the anus or vagina, it's more difficult to dilute the mixture once it is applied or wash the area if necessary.

Any information from publications or friends (even this article) about what is an irritant (something which produces an itching or burning sensation) or a stimulant, or how much or how little to use, should be considered only as guidelines.

Liniments

Liniments are ointments, creams, or gels that contain menthol, camphor, wintergreen, capsaicin or some other heat-producing substance. They are sold to relieve joint and muscle pain. Liniments not only provide a different type of sensation during a scene, they are useful for prolonging the effects of a scene after you and the bottom have parted.

Peppers:

**They're not just
for chili anymore!**

Oil of Wintergreen is one of my favorites. It is not an essential oil but a synthetic compound sold in pharmacies as a liniment. I like to apply it to well-spanked skin. Just as the bottom is relaxing into the sensation of having oil rubbed in and is about to thank me for the kindness, the liniment heat sets in. The bottom's surprise is well worth the scent that tends to linger on my hands.

Ben-Gay™, *Icy-Hot™* or similar products produce a salutary response when applied to the (male or female) genitals. The sensation builds quickly to its highest point and then fades. I've found that after a half hour things are back to normal. Since most liniments are oil-based, quick removal requires soap and water. Liniments typically have a very strong scent which does not fade nearly as quickly as the physical effects.

You can also use scent as a component in a scene. A small dab of something under the nose (e.g. *Vick's™* or *Mentholatum™*) will make it impossible for a sub to discern any other smells and will get the brain thinking in one

direction while the body is being taken in another. After a long and thorough flogging, open the bottle of winter-green oil so that the bottom gets a good whiff and starts thinking about the heat and sting — but then apply some black pepper oil to the nipples!

Peppers

They're not just for chili anymore. Peppers can be handy, disposable sources of very intense sensation. Capsaicin is what gives peppers their heat. Green bell peppers have virtually none. Habenero peppers are the hottest and will almost certainly result in blisters if applied directly to the skin. Jalapeno and Thai peppers fall in the middle of the heat spectrum, are readily available and are probably best with which to start experimenting.

Cut the pepper in some manner that suits the scene (lengthwise, small slices, a significant shape) and apply to waiting skin. You can also squeeze the juice onto the skin. (This is one of those occasions when you might want to wear latex gloves) Try chilling a pepper in the refrigerator before using it. The hot/cold contrast is always a good surprise.

Ointments containing capsaicin sold to relieve joint pain are a convenient way to play without carrying actual vegetables around with you. The regular strength contains .25% capsaicin; the extra-strength .75%. The extra-strength is probably the better choice for most occasions since the base ointment serves to dilute the effect of the heat.

Powders

Certain spices are skin irritants of varying degrees. They can be removed with soap and water. Some spices, like paprika, will tend to stain. The fresher the spice, the more potent it will be. If possible, buy whole spices and grind your own. An electric coffee bean grinder is perfect.

Ground ginger is a good place to start experimenting with powders. The technique is referred to as "figging" in all those Victorian novels. Sprinkled on the genito-rectal area, it produces a strong itching sensation. Dip a glycerin suppository in ground ginger or ground cloves for a stronger sensation. A tampon soaked in oil is another convenient way to use powders internally. Cinnamon's appeal is mostly in its scent but it does produce a subtle warming sensation.

Astringents

Strong astringents, such as vinegar (which can sometimes be found in little packets in take-out restaurants) will sting abraded skin and sensitive areas. Another use for vinegar has little to with sensation and everything to do with perception.

Remember those baking soda and vinegar volcanoes we made in grade school? Have him lie on his back (blindfolded is best), shake a good coating of baking soda on his penis and surrounding area, and then liberally spray on some basic white vinegar (a small plastic spray bottle is a good item to add to your gear) and wait for the reaction.

Imagine what goes through his mind as he hears the sizzling sound of the reaction.

Anesthetics

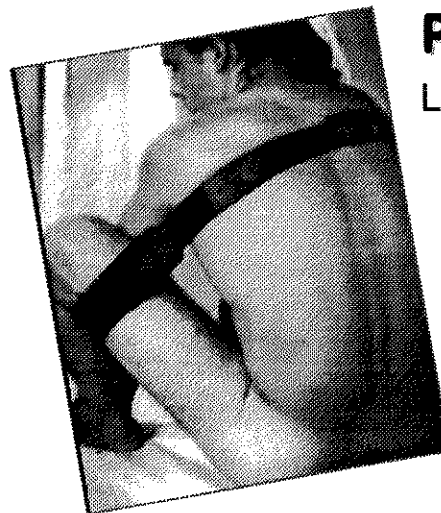
"Hey, if I didn't want to feel it I wouldn't be a bottom!"

Topical anesthetics are sold to relieve sunburn pain (Solarcane™, Lanacaine™, xylocane) or mouth pain (Anbesol™) and will deaden the nerve endings at the surface of the skin. Why not *deprive* your bottom of that cherished sensation? What could be more sadistic than withholding pain from a masochist? Let her see the wax falling from the burning candle; let her realize that it is landing on her belly; let her want to feel the warmth grow; watch her frustration build because she doesn't feel what she expects to feel! (Sometimes I can be rotten.)

Miscellaneous Foodstuffs

Many of the following food items come in foil packs or other single-serving packages and can be collected when visiting cafeterias or fast food restaurants. (It's time to start thinking like my grandmother — if it isn't nailed to the table put it in your pocket or bag and figure out something to do with it later.) Lemon or other citrus juice will inflame already raw or open skin. Ever squeeze a lime into a drink when you had a torn cuticle? The cold of the fruit juice is an interesting contrast to the heat of abraded skin until the citrus oil begins to sting.

continued on p 28



PAUL C LEATHER

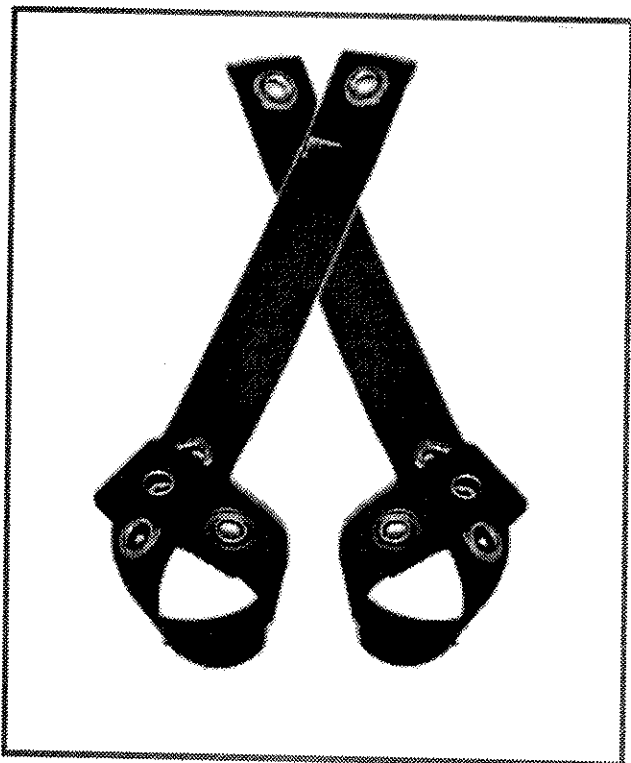
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Make These Cargo Sling Cuffs

Using Simple Tools and Scrap Leather

by "Adam Selene"

This cuff design has been around a long time. Its main benefits are that it can spread a lot of load along the back and outside of the hand, with little pressure on the wrist and offers a secure grab strap for the wearer. Used in a suspension application its noose-like design will grab the wrist if the wearer loses his or her grip or concentration. However, it is not as popular as it might be because it can tighten uncomfortably under load

or be loosened and slipped out of by the wearer. In this version, any clip, rope or lock passed through the two holes in the loop and one of the holes in the strap will prevent this from happening.

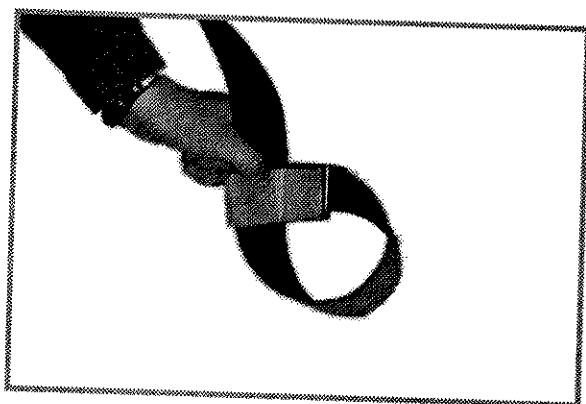
The tools needed for the project are simple, inexpensive and easy to use. You'll need a cutting board of some kind; a sharp knife and a metal straight-edge; a piece of chalk for marking, and a grommet set with a punch and grommets. A grommet is used to secure the folded loop of the strap, as well as to protect the

load-bearing holes, eliminating the need for sewing or riveting. Use the largest and heaviest hammer you can control to punch the 1/2" diameter holes and set the The Number 4 brass grommets.

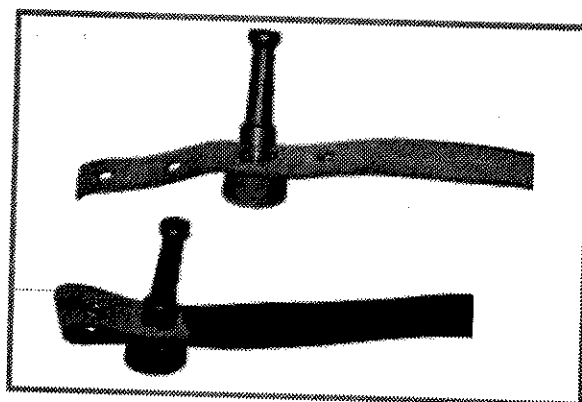


Many people like this cuff made of a soft garment leather or suede. My preference is for a hard leather with a smooth inner surface. A well worn "garrison belt" is ideal, and since these belts do seem to shrink many inches if not worn for a couple or three years, (!?) using the leather is preferable to trying to stretch the belt until it fits again.

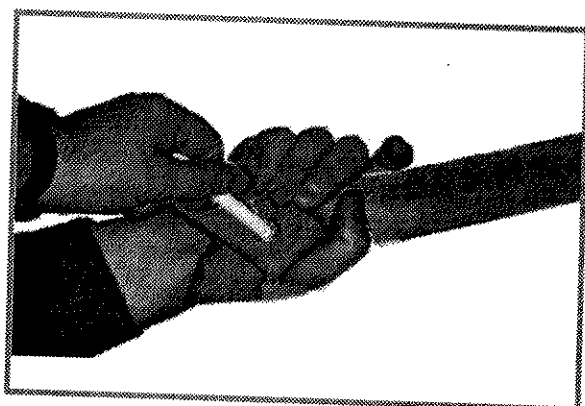
A block of 1/2 to 3/4" thick polyethylene makes a good cutting and punching block. The little wooden block that comes with the Grommet Set and Punch kit will work as well for the few holes this project requires.



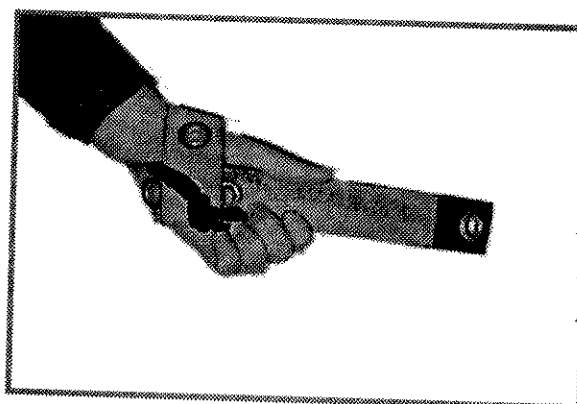
Measure and cut a piece of leather 24" long, fold as shown with room for one grommet and mark for gluing and punching



Note that the two "extra holes" are grommetted before the fold is glued and grommetted to form the loop.



The cuff is adjusted and marked for the "extra" holes. Note: this is the *left* hand cuff being held in the right hand for marking. In the next photo the left hand cuff is on the left hand. (Note the "lead" of the long strap, from the edge of the hand to between the



thumb and forefinger). The end of the strap has been folded over and another rivet added to make a strong attachment point. A piece of rope has been used to lock the size of the loop in place.

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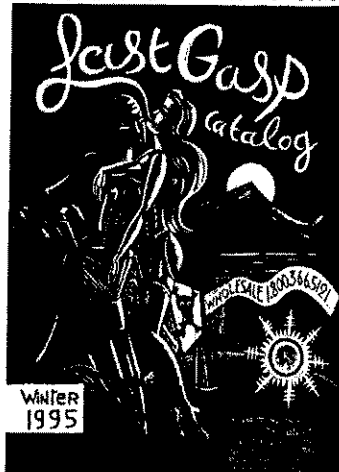
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In our ongoing effort to bring our readers examples of various kinds of slave contracts, we offer this from *Metropolitan slave* magazine and thank JEB, the publisher.

Metropolitan slave's contract

1) i desire to be Your slave. In signing this contract i am making my intent known to You, Master, with the full knowledge that none of this is enforceable if You or i, choose not follow the terms of the contract.

2) i am not trying to make You an accomplice to my life failures, nor am i seeking escape from responsibilities i have incurred. Rather i am comfortable with my life and making slavery as a free choice, not as an escape.

3) You, as Master, may do as You wish. It is my joy to obey You. Make sure to use me, as in disuse, i will become less of a slave. Your commands are not burdensome to me, however, the lack of Your command is ruinous.

4) This relationship (should/should not) be governed by Leather Community standards. i really (give/ don't give) a damn what the Leather Community thinks of our relationship.

5) In terms of our relationship, i feel it is best if we, (include/do not include) others in our lifestyle, especially in the dungeon. i (expect/do not expect) to keep the same friends as i had before entering into this contract with You Sir.

6) i also (do/do not) accept the fact that You have the right to use corporal punishment should You, alone, deem it necessary. Specifically, the items of corporal punishment included are (nothing, hand, belt, straps, paddles, canes, floggers, cats, whips, bullwhips). The severity of the punishment is up to You Master, but includes (nothing/red marks/bruises/welts/ cuts to blood).

7) Sexually, we will (use/not use/eventually not use) a condom. The receipt of Your semen in me is (very important/not important) to bond us together as Master/slave. To the best of my knowledge i am (HIV+/ HIV-).

8) i have the right to terminate my slavery to You anytime i wish. i feel a safeword (is/is not) necessary.

9) my life is now one of obedience tempered with reality. i am eager to serve You as ably as one man can serve another and still be considered a man.

Signature and Date



Confessions of a Pin-up Addict

by Miss Mercy

I'm in love with Jessica Rabbit ... and

Bettie Page, and Senorita Rio, and Marilyn Monroe, and the Olivia ladies, and Miranda the Tease, and Lady Lucifer.

Those gorgeous ladies with loooong legs and mischievous eyes and wild adventures that throw their skirts up over their nylon stocking tops so we can see their lacy underpinnings! They got tied up and squirm around the floor like a demented Anaconda and promise you ANYTHING if you'll help them them in their quest for adventure. I just can't get enough of 'em!

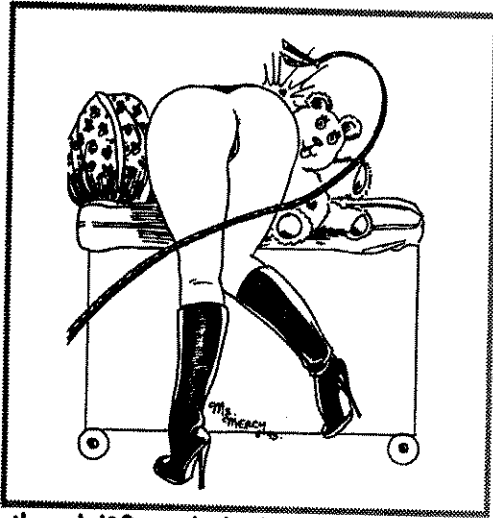
So I gotta draw 'em. It started when I was a mere girl, poking into my father's top drawer for copies of Eros and Sex to Sixty with all that neat Bill Ward art. I often doodled chained damsels in high heels and corsets and gagged bondage while working as night shift supervisor in PA.

I kept on drawing comics heroines and lovely ladies and collecting all sorts of comics and absorbing a great education in the art of pin-ups. The art of bondage followed easily, as I had been drawing women trapped in dungeon vile since my 20's.

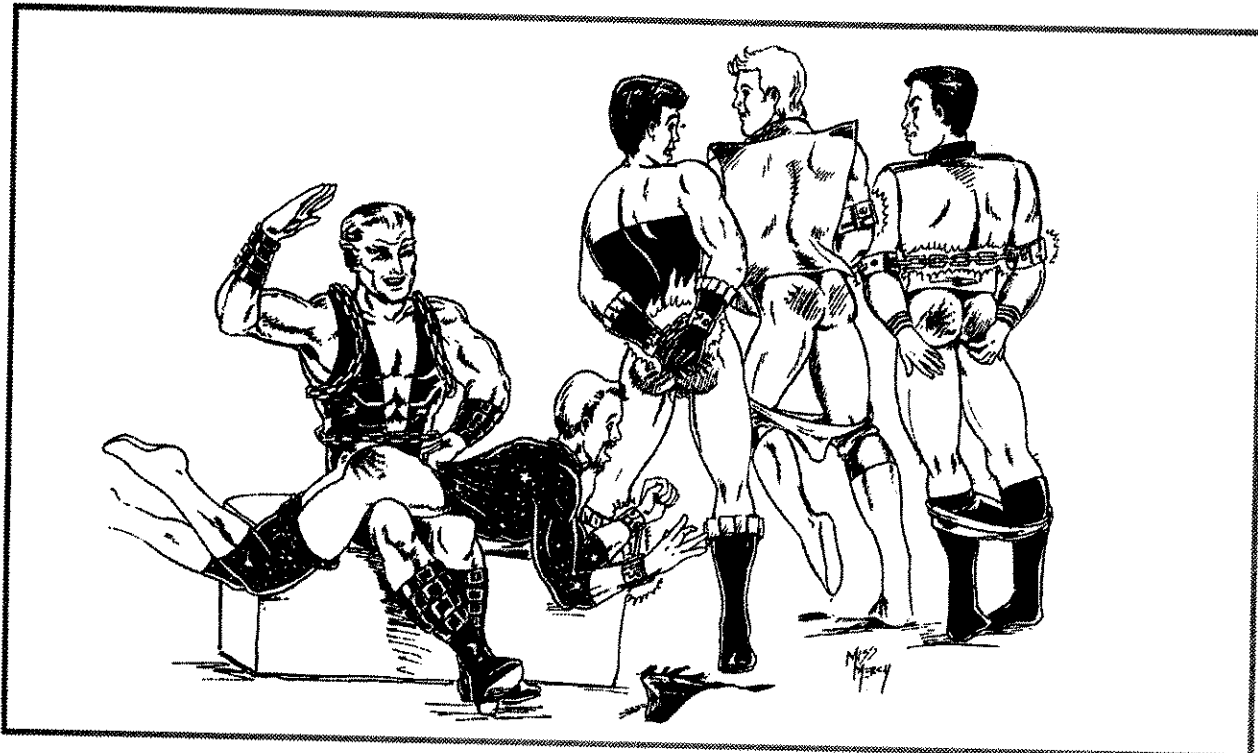
> I loved the contrast of tight leather glove squeezing tender white flesh. Like chickens trussed up for roasting.



In 1987, I started drawing Miranda the Tease for Leg Show, a men's magazine, and had a lot of fun drawing and writing her adventures. Miranda is a smart sexy lady who knows all that super-spy stuff and is expert in the science of love, martial arts, high heels, bondage and juicy meat..



In the early '90s, my husband and I started our own comics company, Evolution Comics, because we wanted comics that were fun and adventurous but not stooooopid. If you wanna get it done right, yah gotta do it yerself, y'know. In New Frontiers #1, I draw the antics of Green Ghost and Lotus and their sexy villainess, Lady Lucifer. Lady Lucifer is a kinky villainess. She ties up Green Ghost, our hero, and tapes his struggles to view later in private.





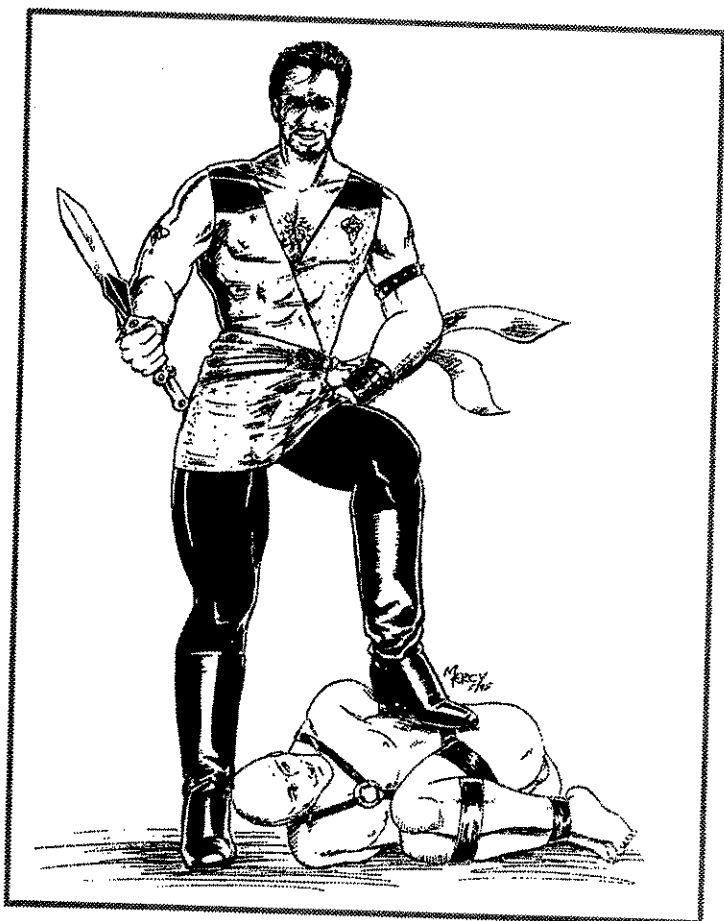
Body type isn't the sole indicator of sexiness. Big women are often sexier than little women and in this drawing [the big women] the action is hotter with lots of flesh

We do a lot of comic book and science fiction conventions across the country and I do art for folks who want to tell me their fantasies and draw 'em up in a dizzying variety of styles: comic book, pin-up, furry, cartoony, realistic render or surreal. From ads in various S & M publications, I get letters from folks wanting specific scenes done, often leather and whipping. Faves of mine. The imagination and lusts of the folks out there astound and delight me as I draw their dreams and "search for Spock." I love my work.



Mercy Van Vlack has been living in New York City with her lifemate Ken Gale for over 11 years.

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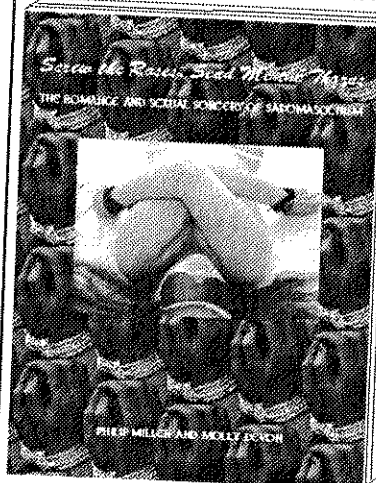
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Lotions, Potions, and Powders,

continued from p 21

Sugar syrups (honey, corn syrup, maple syrup) can be applied in thin layers to the skin and allowed to dry. They take an excruciatingly long time to dry (I'm talking hours) but produce an itching sensation as they do so.

Sometimes it can be fun to salt a wound. Salt water kept in a spray bottle is most convenient. Salted butter, available either in a home setting or purloined from a diner, will irritate particularly raw or open skin - and it is fun to remove.

Essential Oils

There are hundreds of essential oils available. Very, very concentrated substances when they come directly out of the bottle, essential oils are pure. You can dilute essential oils by mixing them with a base or carrier oil which is widely available as massage oil. If your bottom has dry skin, oils may be absorbed before you can spread them around. A small amount of base oil applied to the skin before you start will moisturize the skin. You can apply it early in the scene and come back to the good stuff much later, or surreptitiously add the essential oil during what the bottom thinks is just a rubdown.

If you need to remove the oil from the skin use liquid soap and warm water. Finish with an astringent rinse.

Essential oils of clove, black pepper, bay and pine are generally irritants. Stimulants include essential oils of peppermint (also an irritant) and the various citrus essential oils (grapefruit, orange, lemon, lime). Essential oil of cinnamon may be appealing but it is too strong, even when diluted, to be used on skin directly. Synthetic cinnamon oils can be purchased at adult stores.

Final Thoughts

A sealable plastic bag or a cosmetics bag keeps tubes and bottles together in your gear bag and reduces the harm done by spills and leaks. A small box of baby wipes or some pre-moistened towelettes are another removal item that carries well.

In the case of medicinal items, pay attention to the expiration dates. Chemicals change as they age and in the case of compounds or mixtures some ingredients may increase in strength and some may evaporate, considerably, changing the original formula and yielding unexpected results when applied. Essential oils typically last no longer than a year. They should be stored in a cool, dry, dark location.

(Ms McMillan has been "torturing" her bottoms with increasing ingenuity. She can be reached here at The Guardian with your questions and comments.)

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Squiredom

Editor's Note:

The "Knight-Squire" pattern offers great flexibility in the service that might be required, and in that one Knight might have several Squires, each with different duties.

In Medieval times this was one of the few non-reciprocal power arrangements. The Knight had no feudal obligations in regard to the Squire. The Squire was allowed to follow his Knight, sharing all the hardships, doing all the dirty work, and observing his Master. He could be beaten, insulted or abandoned at the whim of the Knight, who was not actually required to teach, defend, or even feed his Squire. But, a Knight was judged by the condition of his Squire as well as by that of his horse and armor. And, often the Knight wanted or needed the goodwill of the Squire's family — which might have more wealth and power than his own.

This particular bond has survived in reality, literature

and fantasy until the present day. In literature and fantasy the character of the "partner" as in Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, and the "sidekick" in innumerable Horse Operas is essentially The Squire, carried forward into modern settings. So great is the appeal of this set of roles that it has been incorporated and idealized by groups who perform Medieval Reenactments.

These people are no more (or less) given to conscious, eroticized, consensual BDSM than any other "mainstream" group. A majority of them would be offended to hear that their Squiring system could be interpreted or used in this context.

Accordingly, the exact organizational affiliations in the following article have been deliberately obscured.

But notice what this Knight and Squire have to say about it "from the inside."

So you want to be a squire. Why? What do you expect to happen after you become a squire? What sort of relationship do you expect to have with your Knight? These are important questions — becoming a squire can be an awkward and painful mistake.

Do not become a squire because you think it's a fast ticket to knighthood, because you think it's some sort of award, or because you feel pressured to accept an offered squiredom. Think about it. Be smart.

Squiredom may be appropriate for you if you: particularly enjoy improving your fighting; sincerely admire a Knight or master; want to learn and believe that a particular Knight can teach you best; are good friends with the Knight's other squires and household members Choose

a situation that you can be happy with.

A squire is part student, servant, soldier, masochist, ignorant child, favored niece/nephew, and friend. A Knight is part teacher, concerned parent, commanding officer, sadist, taskmaster, role model, and friend. The proportions of these characteristics vary with each Knight and squire. The resulting interactions define the relationship. In every case however, it is a relationship of authority and mutual responsibility.

Knights take squires for much wider reasons than most people seem to think. Not all squires will someday be Knights themselves. But all squires, hopefully, will in some ways be better people. That is the Knight's commitment to the squire. The squire, seeking self-improvement, pledges loyalty and effort. This feudal bond, one to one, is the strongest in our Society. Even a King violates it at his peril.

Knowing this, if you still want to be a squire, do your research. If offered squiredom, don't accept until you know why. If you ask a Knight, know exactly why you want to be that Knight's squire. Don't be embarrassed; most Knights will be flattered by your respect and thoughtfulness.

However, you must be understanding if the response is negative. Taking a squire is a big responsibility, and each Knight has limits. Wait, or ask another Knight. It is your quality that matters.

—Sir Lars Vilhialmsson, 1984

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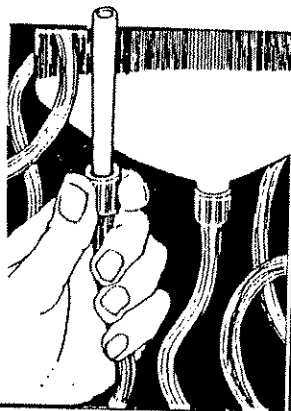
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PARADIGMS OF SUBMISSION

Vassalage Ceremonies

by Stephen

For those of you not familiar with Medieval society a few words about vassalage might not be amiss, and some discussion of the vassalage ceremony as it was practiced.

One of the paradigms of submission that one encounters from time to time is that of vassalage. Just look around at the number of "Lord"'s and "Liege"'s in the community at large, and you can see where the paradigm has had significant influence.

The relationship of vassal to lord was at the heart of feudal system. Vassalage has its roots in the Frankish kingdom of Merovingia where free men would commend themselves into the hands of other free men, exchanging loyalty for protection. Vassalage was greatly expanded by Charlemagne so that greater men and nobles began to accept lords and become vassals. By the Middle Ages vassalage had spread throughout Europe.

**"... the vassal
of my vassal
is not
my vassal."**

In the usual situation, the vassal gave himself over to his lord and gave his lord services and loyalty. The would almost always include some form of military service. In addition, the lord might expect some financial support, and advice.

In exchange, the vassal would receive protection and maintenance. Protection was usually in the form of military defense if the vassal was attacked. Maintenance was typically in the form of a "benefice" or a "fief," a land grant used to support the vassal. While it was rare for a vassal to have no benefice, it was significantly more common than it was for a vassal to owe no services.

While it was possible to be released from vassalage, it was something to be requested, not demanded. More often than not, vassalage was for life. And while the position was not technically hereditary, it was frequently passed down from father to son, the father making arrangements before his death to put his son in vassalage to his lord.

Because the feudal system was hierarchical, one's lord frequently would be a vassal to another lord. However there was no direct legal obligation between a lord and the sub-vassal. The rule formulated in 14th century France and widely followed was, "the vassal of my vassal is not my vassal." Vassalage was a personal agreement, and there was no

The Modern Squire

by Justinian T. Sluggard



The Great Hall was filled to capacity, packed with the lords and ladies of the court. The Knight presented me to the Royalty. They approved of his choice. He turned to me and spoke. "I am a strict but fair master. I will train you in the ways of the knight-hood to the best of my ability. You will learn proper ways to act on and off the field. You will act with courtesy and honor. You will better yourself and others by your actions. You will practice the arts and sciences and teach whenever you are able. You shall be my representative when I am unable. I will be as quick to praise as I will be to punish. Are you ready?"

I nodded, dropped to one knee, grabbed the end of his sword and replied, "I swear to uphold the code of Chivalry and to follow you on and off the field until the day that I am granted the honor of becoming a Knight." I rose to my feet, the red belt of a Squire was placed around my waist.

The Knight spoke. "This blow will be the first of many you will accept at my hands, unanswered!" Then he struck me across the left side of my face. Hard. So hard I almost fell over but I still stood. We turned to face the court. With tears in his eyes the Knight said, "May I now present my new Squire!" Life as I had known it was about to change!

This is not a passage from some third-rate sword and sorcerers novel. This is happening in today's world. You've probably heard of medieval re-creation groups? I belong to one of these groups and the above happened to me.

A Medieval squire's duties were very diverse: from standing with his Knight in Court to sleeping with his Knight's horse and guarding it in unknown stables. His whole life revolved around his Knight and everything he did was for the Knight's well-being and service.

The squire was generally treated as property, about a step lower on the food chain than his Knight's horse. (A good war horse could cost as much as a house full of his peasants' farming could bring him in a year). A good squire was treated with favor because he was useful. He could dress Knight and Horse in matching leather and steel ensembles — armor. He ran errands. He maintained the arms and armor and the horse.

In the modern anachronist world it seems at times that the Squire is there for the amusement of his Knight. When Knights get together socially and bring their Squires, they show off by having their Squires perform "Stupid Squire Tricks." Knights take great pride in their Squires' skills. Knights will enter their best and brightest in tourneys called a "Squire Showcase."

Other duties could range from baby-sitting children on an ice cream trip, to helping to carry a nine-foot pink penis past 10,000 laughing spectators!

It is the Squire's job to keep his Knight's tankard full. (If the Squire becomes too good at this, he must be able to carry his Knight home and then deal with the Knight's lady.) If he becomes neglectful, the Knight must point this out. The Squire then bows his head in shame — and then gets his Knight a fresh beer.

If a Knight or his Lady is in need of assistance and a nearby Squire is not engaged, he becomes their Squire-pro-tem until his assistance is no longer required. A Squire can be called into service at any moment, day or night. Once upon a time, a group of Squires were planning a big night of wenching and drinking. At 9pm, their Knight decided his armor wasn't just right, so he had his Squires work till 4am building him a new suit of dress fighting armor from scratch.

A Squire's life is not his own.

In public a Squire is not even allowed his own opinion. (If asked for one, he must inquire of his Knight, "What is my opinion?") On one occasion, right after a Squire was Knighted, he was sent for by his old Knight. His reply was, "Tell his grace I will be there in a moment. I am formulating my first opinion."

(Justinian is the nom de guerre of a bona fide Squire who is no sluggard when it comes to serving his knight!)

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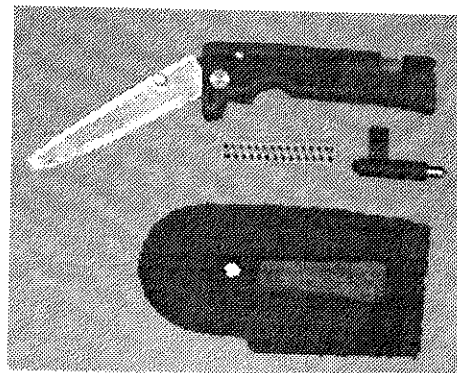
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A blunt tip and recessed, set-back, sawtooth edge make it perfect for cutting away rope restraints or clothing, quickly, safely and stylishly. Unconvincing and nearly useless as a weapon,* this knife is hard to fetishize, but an invaluable addition to any bondage-devotee's kit or gear bag.

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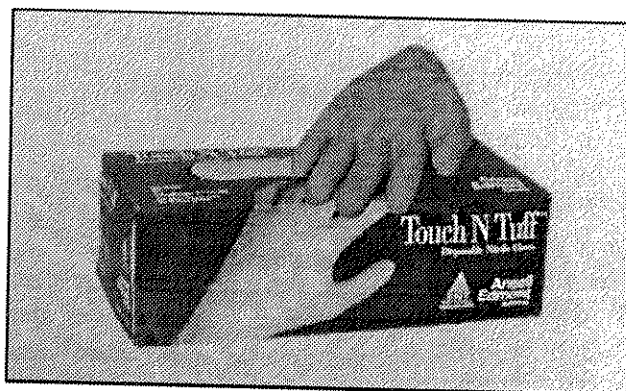
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***Advisory:** Although unrestricted in its sales, this knife could create legal difficulties for a civilian owner. Due to its heavy blade, and light locking spring this tool can be opened with a flick of the wrist, making it potentially subject to *The Federal Switchblade Act of 1958* which defines a prohibited knife as: ... any knife having a blade which opens automatically 1) By hand pressure applied to a button or other device in the handle OR 2) By operation of inertia, gravity or both. In addition, the thumb-stud and locking mechanism could be construed as violating CA and MA's new knife laws. In most jurisdictions, the spring-loaded punch could, with some justification, be considered a "burglary tool." Therefore, discretion in the carrying and displaying of this rescue device is advised. In addition, it might be prudent to remove the punch spring from the handle assembly.

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direct duty to one's 'suzerain', as the lord of one's lord came to be called in France.

Toward the end of the feudal period, it became possible to be a vassal to more than one lord. Sometimes written contracts were used to define the homage involved, though that was rare. With the development of multiple lords, the concept of *dominus ligius*, the "liege lord" came into being, that being the lord one owed full strict loyalty to, one's "primary lord" as it were. One performed the ceremony for each lord, and everyone knew which lord was owed primary loyalty.

The ceremony itself was rather simple. The vassal "commended" himself "into the hands" of his lord. This was done by kneeling before his lord, and his closed hands raised up in a praying position. Then the lord wrapped his hands around the vassal's closed hands, accepting him. At that point an oath of fealty was given by the vassal to the lord, and in later eras sometimes the lord kissed the vassal in return.

The oaths taken varied with the circumstances. For example, one vassal to Charlemagne offered,

"By this oath I promise to be faithful to the lord Charles, the most pious emperor, son of King Pepin and Bertha, as a vassal should rightfully be to

his lord, for the preservation of his kingdom and of his rights. And I will keep and hope to keep this oath which I have sworn, as I know it and understand it, from this day henceforward, with the help of God, the creator of heaven and earth, and of these sacred relics."

In a later era, a vassal vowed,

"I promise, by my faith, that from this time forward I will be faithful to Count William and will maintain towards him my homage in good faith and without any deception."

And a simpler and more commonly used oath was,

"Hear this, my lord: I bear you faith in life and limb, in body and chattels and earthly honor, so help me God and these holy relics."

This brief introduction should not be taken as a comprehensive overview of a system that was hardly uniform and evolved over the course of several centuries.

For those who are more curious, I suggest the text *Feudalism* by F.L. Ganshof as one of several available at local libraries.

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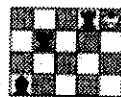


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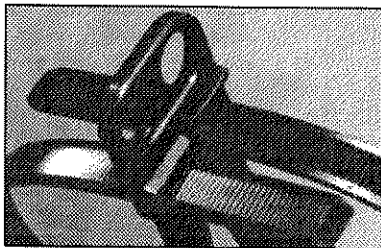
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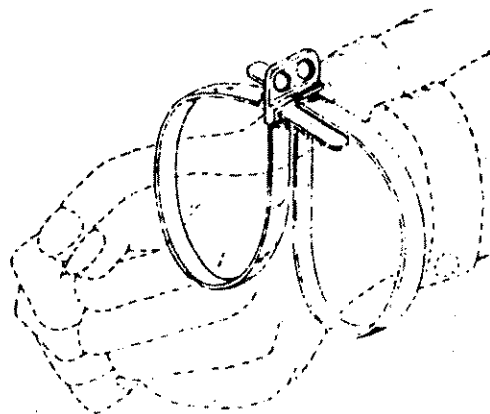
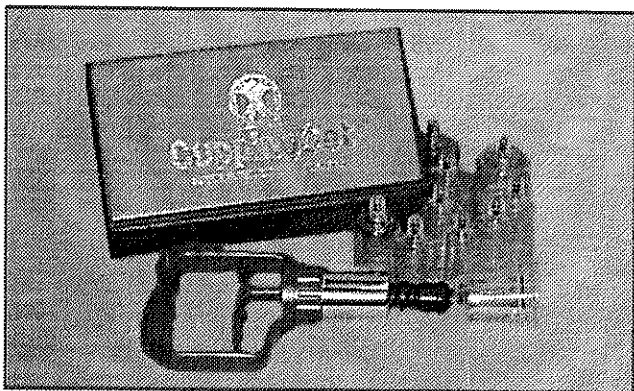
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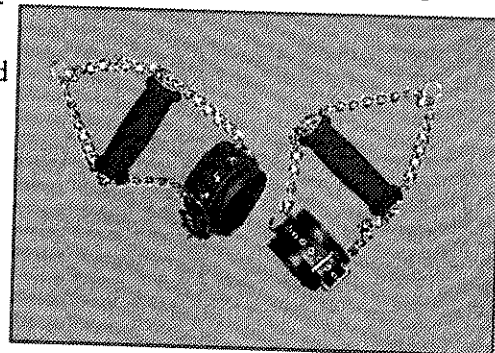
This cuff is meticulously made of glove-quality leather, with tight even stitching and exceptional finishing throughout. Artificial fur lining will virtually eliminate abrasion on even the boniest wrists. Securing straps are substantial harness leather, attached with aircraft rivets. The strap's holes are reenforced with hand-set metal grommets. There is a generously

sized piece of Velcro™ under the buckle for a firm, non-constricting fit. This is a feature other cuff-makers would do well to copy.

The contoured and padded hand grip feature is *original* with *Leather By Danny*. Its value is confirmed by the number of imitations coming into the market. Besides giving the wearer something to hold on to (or hang from), it is a miniature "strongback" which keeps the side attachment chains from compressing the wrist under load. The gain in comfort has to be experienced to be fully appreciated. If necessary, the hand grip can be adjusted to accommodate hands of different lengths, although a pair of small wrenches (or two pairs of pliers) are needed to do the job. Danny might want to consider replacing the two lag-bolts that hold the handgrip with a threaded rod and wing-nuts.

In keeping with the aesthetics of the piece, the hardware is beautifully plated and smooth. However, the chain and d-rings are not welded, and the main attachment ring is

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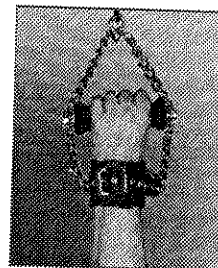


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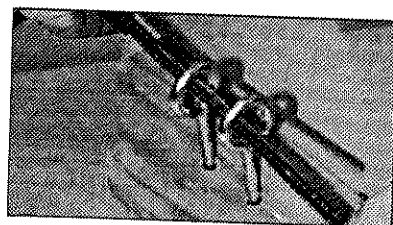
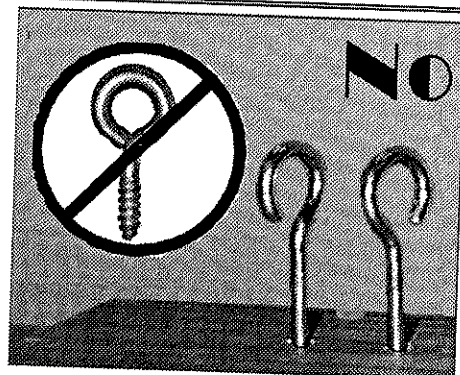
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More Screw-Eyes!

by The Bo'sun

When you need to string a line from here to there, you usually thread it through an screw-eye. Which is fine, if you mean to leave the line in place and you've got plenty of time. But if you've got something (or *someone* - ed) to lace up, and not much time to do it in, there is a better way.

Mount two hooks, a couple of rope diameter apart, with their open ends facing outward. The heavier the load you expect, the bigger the hook you use.

Now when you want to secure your line, just zig-zag it — lead it first under one hook, then under the other. It's done.

You want to remember that hooks just aren't as strong as eyes the same size though you are usin' two of them. its *mebbe a mite* (perhaps a bit) more likely let yer line go adrift, (let the rope slip out) than a closed eye would be but its a *dang sight* (a great deal) *more handy* (faster.)

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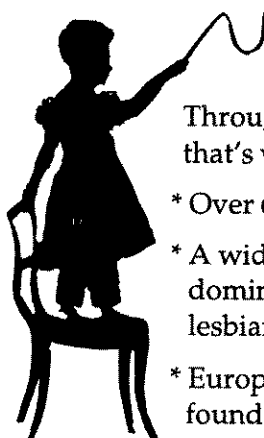
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Although intended as a textbook for police officers, there's a huge amount of practical information for BDSM devotees, and much food for thought and fantasy, too!

Author John Peters evidences something more than a cool, professional interest in handcuffs in his introductory discussion of rigid restraints from biblical times to the past century. He manages to slip in some observations on thumbscrews and other "torturous restraints," too.

But most importantly, Mr. Peters is a martial artist and a policeman. His book is intended to encourage law officers to master, in depth, the correct use of this tool of their trade.

The problem with handcuffs is that they are so deceptively simple. Even experienced police officers fall into the trap of assuming that they will be able to "snap the bracelets on," when the need arises, they have never been trained in their use. This creates two perils. The obvious one is that officer may lose control of a desperate, dangerous person at exactly the wrong moment. On the other hand, handcuffs are basically dull steel blades encircling the wrists, and equipped with a ratcheting mechanism capable of exerting great force against bones, tendons, nerves and blood vessels. Used correctly they are rigid restraints. Abused they become weapons, or instruments of torture.

Getting down to business, he first addresses the "chain" vs "hinge" handcuff style controversy, making powerful arguments for adopting the newer hinge style. His points are that the hinged cuff:

- is more easily applied by smaller-handed officers,
- immobilizes the prisoner's hands more completely,
- is mechanically stronger and more tamper proof.

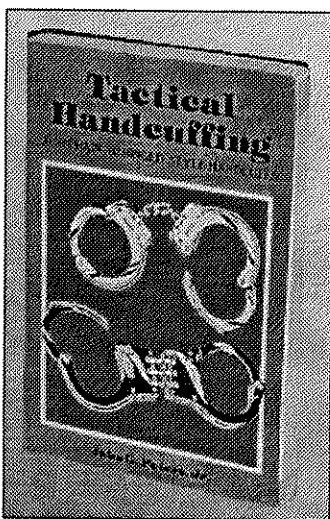
He also extols special virtues of the Hyatt™ brand handcuff's "speed loading" feature.

Imparting even this basic information, Peters reveals a number of sensitivities that authors and officers alike would benefit by emulating. He not only uses the "he/she, his/hers" style of gender-neutral writing unselfconsciously, he also addresses some of the gender issues of police work so naturally and confidently that he may actually make an impact on old fashioned "Flatfoots" who have not yet adjusted to women as street cops. Peters never lets the reader assume that all cops are men or that women suspects are less dangerous and are to be restrained less carefully. His search techniques balance delicacy and respect with the requirements of safety and security. He does not appeal to liberal idealism or a modern sense of chivalry in advocating this approach. He presents it as sensible precautions against legal and administrative proceedings against the officer.

Peters emphasizes the officers' legal obligation to preserve their prisoners' dignity and well being, so frequently, that you might get the impression that "Safe, Sane and

Consensual," has become an important Police community standard — But Peters shows that judicial limitations on the use of physical restraint by police began as early as 1824.

Most of this book is a meticulously detailed treatment of handcuffing as a practical skill. Illustrated step by step instructions show how to completely control an unpredictable and potentially violent person while getting the handcuffs on and double-locked. Controlled search techniques are also covered.



In fact, one of the on-the-ground search techniques is so painlessly secure, so helplessly immobilizing, that it should become quite popular among Bottoms ... uh, I mean Officers.

In addition to being perhaps the most complete and practical handcuff text available today, *Tactical Handcuffing* speaks authoritatively to issues of handcuff safety.

There are two issues he does not address: the actual manner of "snapping" the cuffs on a wrist without bruising or breaking it, and the relative merits of Lateral and Parallel methods of behind-the-back-handcuffing.

As to the actual application, Peters assumes that the officer has already obtained the cooperation of the subject, at gunpoint if necessary. His main concern is with techniques that keep the prisoner under control until both cuffs are secure. On the issue of how hard to "push" the bow of the cuff against the wrist so that it swings around and partially locks by its own momentum, or indeed whether to use this technique at all, Peters doesn't commit himself. He only shows the handcuffs placed against the wrist in a position of readiness. The officer, one supposes, will be guided by his or her conscience, and the general rule that injuring a *resisting* suspect is *allowed*, while allowing a prisoner *in custody* to come to harm is *not*.

For BDSM people though, this means that there's nothing "phony" or inauthentic about cooperation while handcuffs are applied and double-locked.

Discussion of the relative merits of the traditional Parallel vs the new Lateral hand position is a serious omission. Although, in fairness, it may be that the Lateral position had not yet proved itself in 1986-1988, while this book was being written.

Since the late 1950's the recommended hand position for freshly arrested prisoners is with the hands behind the back, palms facing outward. It is safer for the arresting officer than any "in front" position where the prisoner can use the cuffs as a club or a garotte. It is easier on the prisoner's arms than if the palms were secured inward. This position was developed using cuffs whose two halves are connected by a short chain.

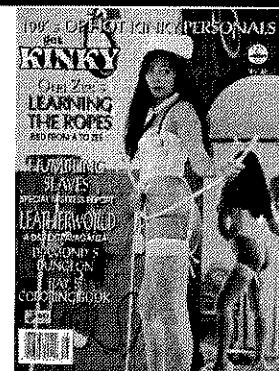
The lateral or "stacked" position, where one hand is secured above the other, palms facing away from the body, became possible only with the introduction of hinge jointed handcuffs in 1982. This position puts less strain on the

... how to completely control an unpredictable ... person while getting the handcuffs on and double-locked.

prisoner's hands, arms and shoulders, and some officers believe it is also more secure. The prisoner is far less able to use the escape artist's trick of sliding the cuffed hands under the backside and over the legs to a frontal position than with the parallel position. In addition the lateral position allows the prisoner's escort to guide or support the prisoner by the shoulder, upper arm and armpit without putting increased strain on the cuffed wrists or the shoulders. In addition, the lateral position removes the escort's temptation to control the prisoner by pulling upward on the handcuffs. In the parallel position this move can produce great pain, or dislocated shoulders depending on the force used. Some officers might not regard this last feature as an advantage.

However Peters *does* address the issues of "thumbcuffs" and "hogties" head-on. His conclusion in both cases: *don't use them— ever!* →

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Thumbcuffs have the advantage of being small and inconspicuous. If used in an "in front" position, the prisoner cannot use the joined hands as a weapon.

However, to be effective restraints, thumbcuffs must be applied so tightly as to endanger the tissues of the thumbs, as was demonstrated by a National Institute of Justice experiment. Nineteen volunteers, in good health and free of circulatory problems were thumbcuffed and observed. If the cuffs were "comfortably tight" all 19 subjects were able to escape them easily. Tightened one notch more, their thumbs began to turn blue within two minutes. The experimenter, Dr. Daniel Frank, observed that danger of necrosis and gangrene was immediate and significant. This experiment did not address the harm to someone so restrained, in the event of a fall or stumble.

Where Hog-Ties are concerned, larger police departments had already experienced fatalities among otherwise uninjured prisoners restrained this way. In 1988, the King County Medical Examiner's Office concluded a study on the possible reason. The immediate cause of death was suffocation. Peters explains the fatal scenario like this

When a person is very combative during the arrest process, it is not unusual for the arresting officer to hobble or hogtie the pris-

oner. To hobble or hogtie the prisoner, a cord or strap is wrapped around the person's two ankles, with the end of the cord or strap then secured to the person's handcuffs. The prisoner is then lifted onto the back seat of the patrol car ... (*face down, Ed.*)

..... there has also been a growing number of prisoners who have died as a result of hogtying. (Because) ... persons who have just engaged in vigorous exercise (e.g., struggling with arresting officers), can die from suffocation ... First, the person's heart rate is increased struggling with the officer (who) decides to hogtie the prisoner. ...

As the person's legs tire, they tend to fall downward. As they do, the hobble or the strap pulls on the handcuffs, which in turn, pulls on the person's arms. Stretching the arms can pull on the chest area and restrict the prisoner's breathing. (Combined with increased oxygen requirements due to agitation and exertion) ... This could lead to sudden or unexpected death.

A word to the wise should be sufficient.



photo: Bill Brent

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Flogging in the British Army

Excerpted from: *An Illustrated History of The Rod*

by The Reverend William Cooper

The instrument of flagellation in the British army was the cat-o'-nine-tails, described in James's *Military Dictionary* as, "a whip with nine knotted cords with which the public soldiers and sailors are punished — sometimes it has only five cords." Tradition assigns this penal device to William III, before whose arrival the whip used for the punishment of British soldiers is said to have had only three thongs.

The military "cat" was a weapon about eighteen inches in length, armed with nine thongs of the same length, each thong bearing five or six knots, compressed and hardened into sharp edges till each had acquired the consistency of horn.

Somerville, in his *Autobiography of a Working Man*, has given his experience of the lash, while a private in the Scots Greys.

He was tried before a court martial on the 29th of May, 1832, "for highly unsoldier-like conduct on the morning of the 28th inst., in dismounting, without leave, when taking his lessons in the riding school, and absolutely refusing to remount his horse when ordered to do so." It is unnecessary here to enter into the question of the justice of the sentence pronounced on Somerville, which was afterwards the subject of an investigation.

The court found him guilty, and by virtue of the Articles of War sen-

tenced him to receive 200 lashes in the usual manner of the regiment, at such time and place as the commanding officer might see fit. The sentence was carried into effect the same afternoon. The regiment was formed four deep round the walls of the riding school. The officers stood in an oblong space within the lines of the men. The regimental surgeon was also there, the hospital sergeant, and two hospital orderlies. The sergeant of the band stood with the *green bag* (containing the "cats"), and Farrier Simpson and a trumpeter each stood with a "cat" in his hand. The sergeant had two more in the bag, to be ready in case these should give way.

The handles were of wood or whalebone, about two feet long, the tails about the same length, each tail two, or perhaps three, times the

thickness of ordinary whipcord, with six hard knots upon it. A form and a chair stood close by, and on the form a pailful of water, with some towels in the water to apply to the back of the culprit, and a basin of water to give him a drink in case he became faint. These were in charge of the hospital sergeant and the two orderlies. A ladder was placed upright against the wall, and several strong looking ropes, half an inch thick or thereabouts, with nooses on them, hung about the ladder and lay on the ground.

When Somerville was led into the square, the commanding officer read the minutes of the court martial, after which he said to the prisoner, "You will take your punishment; strip, sir." He accordingly stripped to his trousers, and was fastened by the





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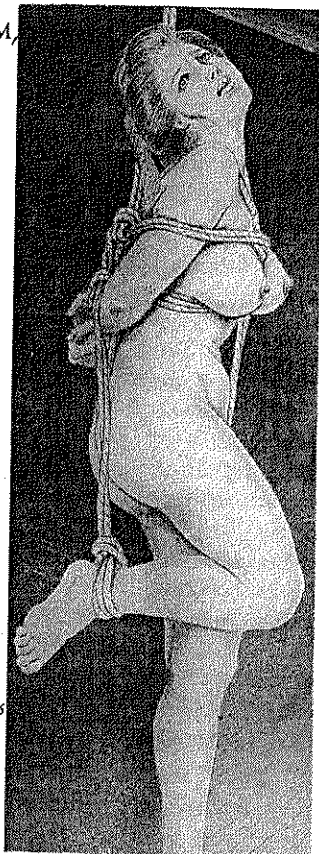
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wrists and ankles to the ladder, so that his arms stretched outwards and his breast and face were brought tightly against the ladder, and so firmly that he could not move. The regimental sergeant-major, who stood behind with a book and pencil to count each lash and write its number, gave the command, "Farrier Simpson, you will do your duty."

The manner of doing that duty was to swing the cat twice round the head, give a stroke, draw the tails of the cat through the fingers of the left hand to rid them of skin, or flesh, or blood: again swing the instrument twice round the head slowly, and come on, and so forth.

In the words of the narrator (Somerville):

Simpson took the cat as ordered; at least, I believe so; I did not see him, but I felt an astounding sensation between the shoulders under my neck which went to my toe nails in one direction, my finger nails in another, and stung me to the heart as if a knife had gone through my body.

The sergeant-major called in loud voice, "One," and I felt as if it would be kind of Simpson not to strike me on the same place again.

He came on a second time, a few inches lower, and then I thought the former stroke was sweet and agreeable when compared with that one. The sergeant-major counted "Two."

The cat was swung twice round the farrier's head again, and he came on somewhere about the right shoulder blade, and the loud voice of the reckoner said "Three."

The shoulder blade was as sensitive as any other part of the body, and when he came again on the left shoulder, and the voice cried "Four," I felt my flesh quiver in every nerve, from the scalp of my head to my toe nails. The time between each stroke seemed so long as to be agonising, and yet the next came too soon.

It was lower down, and felt to be the severest. The word "Five" made me betake myself to mental arithmetic; this, thought I, is only the fortieth part of what I am to get.

"Six" followed, so on up to twenty-five. The sergeant-major then said "Halt!"

Simpson stood back, and a young trumpeter, who had not flogged before, took his cat and began. He had practiced often at a stable-post or a sack of

sawdust, and could handle the instrument as scientifically as any one. He gave me some dreadful cuts about the ribs, first on one side and then on the other. Some one bade him hit higher up, I do not know whom. He then gave them upon the blistered and swollen places where Simpson had been practicing.

The pain in my lungs was now more severe, I thought, than on my back. I felt as if I would burst in the internal parts of my body. I detected myself once giving something like a groan, and to prevent its utterance again I put my tongue between my teeth, held it there, and bit it almost in two pieces. What with the blood from my tongue and my lips, which I had also bitten, and the blood from my lungs or some other internal part ruptured by the writhing agony, I was almost choked, and became black in the face.

It now became Simpson's second turn to give twenty-five. Only fifty had been inflicted, and the time since they began was like a long period of life; I felt as if I had lived all the time of my real life in pain and torture, and that the time when existence had pleasure in it was a dream, long, long gone by. Simpson got up amongst the old sores: the strokes were not so sharp as at first: they were like blows of heavy weights, but more painful than the fresh ones. It was now that he, probably more inclined to remember that he was my friend than a farrier, was commanded in a loud voice in these words, 'Farrier Simpson, do your duty.'

He travelled downwards, and came on heavier than before, but, as I thought, slower. It seemed a weary slowness for the sergeant-major to be only counting the fifteenth and sixteenth of the third twenty-five. When the other youngster had reached his first five-and-twenty, which made a hundred, the commanding officer said, 'Stop, take him down; he is a young soldier.'

The prisoner was then unbound, a wet towel spread on his back, his jacket laid loosely over that, and he was led to the hospital between two men. There a cloth dipped in a lotion was put on the skin, and the patient laid on his back. His back became so stiff that it seemed an impossibility to rise, and when the lotions were changed he had to be lifted up.

(For an account of flogging in the British Navy during the same era, see *The Guardian*, Issue #18.)

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Kids in the House ...

continued from page 9

young teenager. You really shouldn't be looking for shock value with outrageous "in your face" behavior. Save that for the party.

Still, you are ahead of the game if you can dress the way you want. We have found that our babysitters gradually get used to our "weird" ideas about dressing all in black. We leave the collar off, but the teenagers who babysit for us don't seem to care about how we dress.

The ideal scenario is when the babysitter is the child of a friend of yours, and you are open with your friend about your "hobby". Once your friend knows that you are engaged in some harmless fun, you'll be on easy street. We rarely tell all. Most of our vanilla friends know about the nudity, about the collars, and about spanking. Generally, the teenage babysitters only know that we like to go to parties where everyone dresses in black.

At the other extreme, we have had many years where we had to leave the house dressed normally, and needed to change at the party or in the car. Even when the babysitter has no idea of the kind of party you are attending, you can still arrive at the party, looking like you belong there.

Turning Problems Into Opportunities

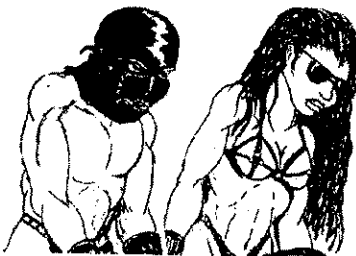
You may not be able to be out to your babysitter. You may need to always appear dressed in normal clothes. With some creativity, you can turn this seeming disadvantage into part of the scene. For example, one day before a major event, my wife opened a crisply folded note written on expensive paper. The note said:

"Dress only in something you can easily remove in the car".

That little note hit her buttons for submissiveness and for not knowing what was coming. Her imagination began to run wild with fantasy scenarios. By the time we were in the car, she was ready for anything, and hoping it would happen. At a quiet, dark spot close to home, I ordered her to

undress in the car, and then put on the collar and leash, and handcuffs, for the drive to the party. She used a big cape for the trip from the car into the house. After the party, she changed back into her vanilla dress in the car. As far as the babysitter was concerned, my wife had left and returned the same way.

Or consider the problem of driving the babysitter home, when you are in the mood to continue playing at home. Again, you can do things to make this task more fun. Perhaps Master will give an order to slavegirl that he expects to find completed when he returns home. Maybe she is commanded to organize the dungeon, lay out the equipment, be kneeling in submissive posture dressed only in her collar. That does nothing to change Daddy's experience of driving



to the home of the babysitter, but Daddy/Master will be smiling the whole way back home, thinking about what is waiting for him. This helps shrug off the rude shock of being back in Daddy role.

Play at Home With Kids at Home

This is probably your most useful option. There is no need to involve anyone else, no need to explain why you are dressed that way, no need to pay babysitter fees. However, you have two problems that must be solved before you can play in your own home while the kids are also home.

First: given the chance, kids are going to sneak up on you, and watch you during a scene. Obviously, you cannot allow this to happen. Your privacy must be secure before you begin a scene.

Second: parenting is a full time job. You must remain available to the

needs of the children, even in the middle of a hot scene. The children need an effective way to get your attention. You need a strategy to deal with the inevitable interruptions. This second problem in particular is the one that our non-parent friends can't seem to grasp. Why can't we just put the kids to bed, and then have the run of the house? Oh, I wish....

A Safe Space to Play

A safe space solves both problems. It assures privacy with some form of a locking door that the kids cannot open. And it comforts the children to know that they can reach you by means of some form of bell, buzzer or similar device.

The Locking Door

Kids are intensely curious, and smarter than we think. In order to keep the kids away from your secret playtime, you must have a locking door. The lock can be as sophisticated as a bathroom doorknob that locks when you push a button or the lock can be as simple as a hook and eye on the inside of the door. You aren't holding out burglars, you're just asking for privacy.

The ideal lock is easy to latch, can be opened by adults from either side of the door without a key, and permits the kids to call us when they need us. The best lock I have found is one of those little chains that allows you to open the door about three inches to talk to someone outside. It lets the child open the door just a crack to shout at us, if need be. That helps the little ones feel secure, and not out of touch with us.

The chain lock allows an adult to open the door from either direction, if you know the trick. The lock is in two parts. The chain mounts on the wall. On the door, you must mount a metal groove that holds the end of the chain when you want to lock the door. The directions tell you to mount the metal groove pointed horizontally away from the opening of the door so burglars can't unlatch the lock by reaching inside. However, if you mount that metal groove so it is vertical, it allows a person on the outside to reach inside and open the

lock. Of course, the lock itself is mounted at the very top of the door, so only adults can reach it to unlatch it. Later, when the kids are taller, we will have to change that strategy.

When the Children Need You

The chain also allows us to incorporate a device to get our attention. We have attached several large jingle bells to the middle of the chain. If the door is opened, the chain is pulled taut, and the bells give off a loud sound.

The jingle bells are loud, but our music is even louder. You might think we would not hear the bells. We hear them! As with any sound important to a parent, we have trained ourselves to hear that sound even when we aren't listening for it. And we have heard it enough times that we know exactly what it sounds like. We can hear that sound through any music at any volume. Also, the kids realize how to make the sound, and they can wiggle the door to make the bells jangle continuously, if they want. The point here is that the kids are confident that they have the ability to call us if we are needed, and that gives them the security they need to fall asleep peacefully.

The View Through The Door

OK, the kids have called you in the middle of your play session. You need to open the door to comfort a child. When that door opens — either a crack or open wide — that child will see something. You certainly don't want the view to include a parent in embarrassing bondage.

Spend a moment to think about what the child will see, either through a crack or a wide open door. If you are lucky, the arrangement of your house gives some natural privacy. For example, our locking door is at the top of the stairs which go down to the dungeon (it's really our rec room.) When that door is open wide, the child can look down the stairs, but not around the corner into the dungeon itself. This arrangement is ideal.

I think the worst arrangement would be to play in your own bed-

room. In most cases, that door is going to open onto a full view of what's going on inside. If the bedroom is your only choice for play-space, you must find a way to block the view. You could solve that problem by hanging a sheet on the wall over the door. In order to open the door, you will have to duck under the sheet, but when the door is open, the view will be blocked. You might leave two inconspicuous nails in position and hang the sheet only during play sessions. Paint those nails the same color as the wall — no one will ever see them. Think about the view *before* you need to open that door.

Getting Used to Interruptions

Most of the time, the interruptions are going to be for very minor things. Still, kids will abuse any privilege, sooner or later. You need to let your children understand that you are available if they need you, but that numerous interruptions for minor reasons is not a fun game for Mommy and Daddy. We use a sliding scale to react to interruptions. Usually, the first interruption is handled without any problem, but we verbally warn them not to interrupt again. Succeeding interruptions are handled with warnings that are progressively more stern.

Generally, it goes in cycles. Many nights we have no interruptions at all. Then, for a few weeks, we seem to have several interruptions every time we play.

Interruptions can be especially frustrating during those times when we are struggling to leave Mommy and Daddy roles. Remember the age old wisdom in this rule: Bedtimes are for Parents. Put your kids to bed a little early, and give yourself the time to play. The whole family will be better off if you do.

Further, as with other problems, this one can be turned to your advantage. In our case, Mommy enjoys some bondage or time in a cage, at the start of a scene to help her calm down from the hectic day. If I am able to put her in comfortable bondage, or in the cage, before the interruption comes, I feel quite free to spend 10

minutes reading a last story. Mommy will enjoy the transition, awaiting my return.

A Convertible Dungeon

Repeat after me: Grownups have to put their toys away, too.

Now that you have a safe play-space, you are free to play. But what will you use to play with or play on? You can't just leave the spanking bench and the floggers lying around, can you? We use equipment that breaks down to store out of sight. Then we store it behind locked doors. Finally, we are good at the art of camouflage for things like eyebolts on the walls.

Everything we own that is related to our SM lifestyle is locked away, so we will never have to retrieve our favorite flogger from the school principal. We use combination locks because we can easily change the combination if the kids figure it out, and there is no key to lose.

continued



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Kids continued from p 45

What if the Kids See the Stuff?

The kids never see us playing. *Never!*

But sometimes they do see one of our toys. Because I build much of our equipment, they have seen almost everything during the construction phase. And what happens if you just plain forgot to put away something, and they find it the next day?

How does this affect the kids?

All kids come with an intense curiosity. The harder you try to hide things, the harder they will work to uncover the secret. But let them see your toys once in a while, let them handle them, and soon they are bored. With their curiosity defused, they no longer have any interest in getting past that lock.

We use familiar, easy to understand language. We tell our kids that Mommy and Daddy like to "play".

We call all of our equipment "toys". So if one of our children asks about the latest piece I am building, it is easy to say, "This is one of our new toys."

Letting your kids occasionally see one of your toys is very different from letting your kids occasionally see you in action. We are very strict about never playing until we are certain the kids cannot possibly watch what we are doing.

Conclusion

You love your kids as much as we love ours, and you wouldn't do anything to cause them harm. With a little planning and preparation, you can have a regular, satisfying SM lifestyle and still raise darling children who have no idea what you are doing behind that locked door.

Has it hurt our kids to occasionally see our toys, or to have us locked away from them after their bedtime? According to their teachers, and the test scores, our kids are among the brightest, the best readers, the most

well-liked and well adjusted kids in the class.

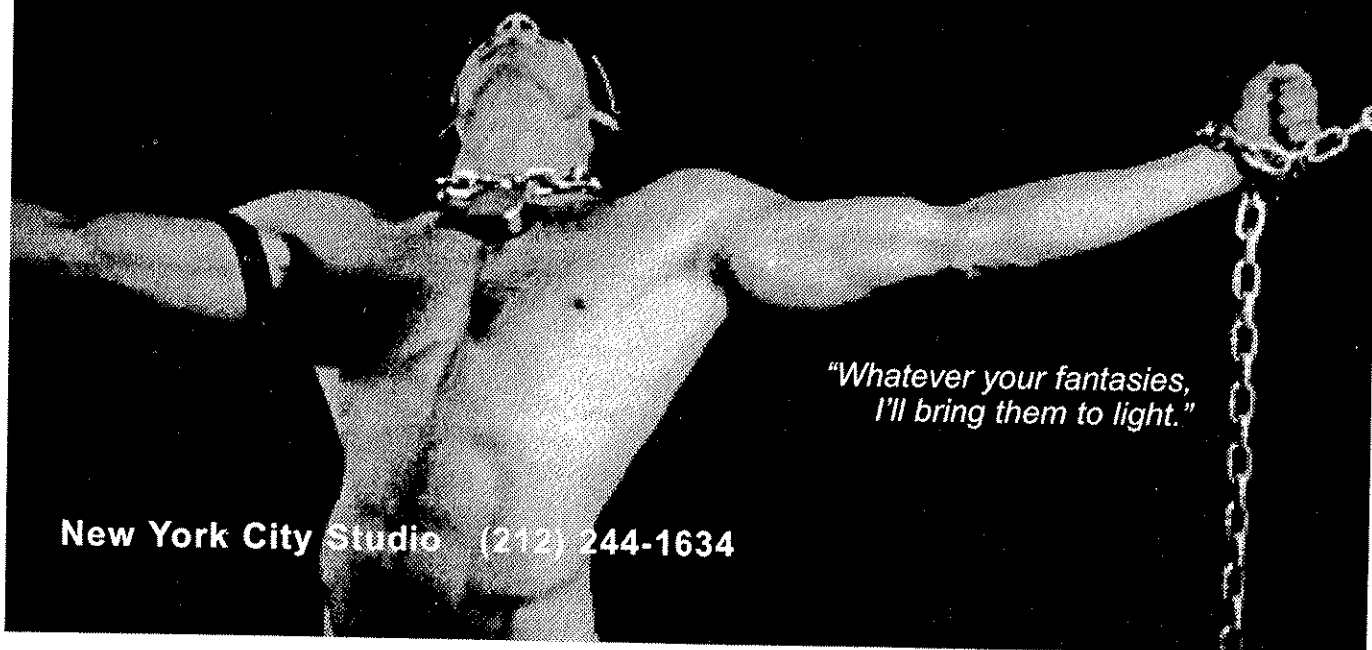
From conversations with folks who have raised kids to adulthood, it is clear to me that none of this matters as much as giving love to your kids. And if a loving SM lifestyle gives you a mini-vacation from life that leaves you refreshed, then you will be all the more loving to them.

The problems exist, and you must deal with them before you can live this lifestyle with kids. But if we can carry on our lifestyle with our two bundles of curiosity, perhaps you can too.

(Michael and Lisa Kraft are a married couple raising their family in the Pacific Northwest. They welcome your questions and suggestions for enjoying an active SM sexlife with kids in the house. Address them here at The Guardian.)

How do you manage? With kids. With roommates. With parents. With neighbors. Write about it and you may see it in *The Guardian* — and get paid, too!

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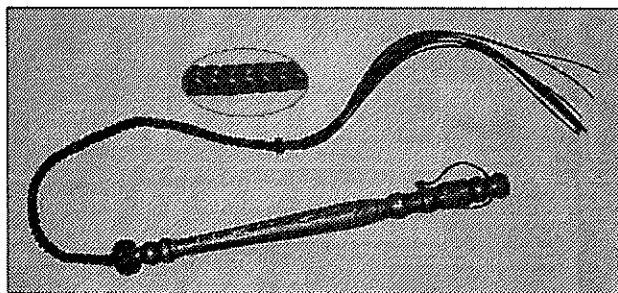
WHAT'S NEW?

is the question asked of us most often by our customers and friends, especially at shows.

As a result and also to keep ourselves interested in what we do, we have to keep coming up with new ideas and new items.

These are some new items that will be included in our next catalog revision.

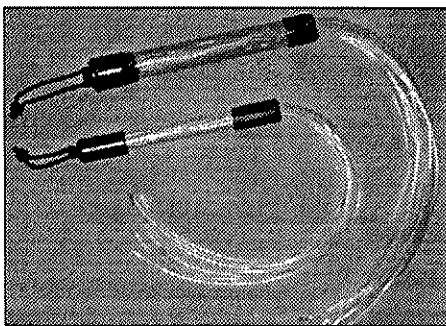
Rubber Viper



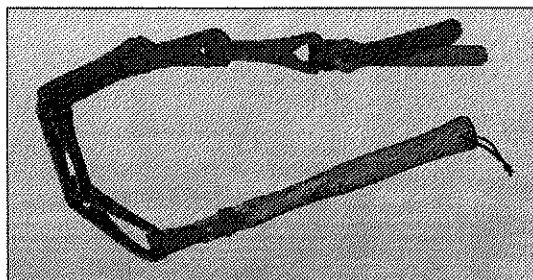
This is a new one of our "Ohmygods." Set in a Flagellarium-style wooden handle, a single braid comes down to a knot and then opens into single strands like a Viper, only without the knots. (We think Rubber doesn't need them, but you can make your own, if you insist.) 30-36" overall. \$95.00

Man o' War

It looks like a larger version of our polyethylene Mini-Birch, but there the similarity ends. A dozen lengths of flexible 1/8" vinyl tubing are set in a clear handle with Black end-caps for a sting similar to but different from that of O-ring rubber. 24" overall. \$45.00



Welsh Pony Whip



In the coal mines of Wales, ponies pulled the wagons along tracks to the surface. These wood-handle whips were carried on the drivers' shoulders. Since the whips often fell off and got run over by the coal wagon, they were made in sections for easy repair. In softer leathers, we have made a version for pony girls ... and other humans, to enjoy. 40-48" overall \$65.00

Bust Duster

Small enough for pocket or purse, gentle enough for the most delicate places, these soft, colorful suede or leather teasers can be wonderful ... or absolute torture! Try them in pairs. 6-8" overall \$7.00 ea., 2 for \$10.00.



If any of these ideas appeal to you, call us at the workshop and let's talk about it. Or send your check or money order to our PO box. Please include \$7.00 for shipping and handling. You can be "the first on your block" to have one of these new creations from ...

Adam and Gillian

Writer's Guidelines -- for *THE SANDMUTOPIAN GUARDIAN*

a Journal of BDSM Realities

The *Guardian* is first and foremost a practical guide to safe and enjoyable exotic eroticism. Think of it as a combination of the *Popular Mechanics*™ and *Consumer Reports*™ of kinky sex. Our readership includes people of all sexual orientations, gender identities and power polarities. While readers' experience levels range from "just thinking about it," to "lifestyle devotee," we want to be especially mindful of, and useful to, the *less* experienced reader.

PAYMENT: We pay — not lavishly, but respectably. Please contact us for particulars, including special situations, including illustrations, and reprints. Contributors get a copy of the magazine in which their article appears.

We buy one-time serial rights with a one-time reprint provision. Payment is on acceptance, and we will respond to all submissions within 60 days. SASE required for return.

We take the broadest possible view of what are appropriate topics, so long as content provides *information*.

No fiction, fantasy, poetry or polemic.

Topics could include:

EQUIPMENT: how to use it, where to buy it, how to make it.

TECHNIQUES: physical, psychological, technical how-to's.

RELATIONSHIPS: Roles & Goals, Paradigms of Submission ... "making it work" articles.

EROTIC SCENARIOS: how they're done, pleasures expected, unusual or hidden health and/or safety concerns.*

PERSONALITY PROFILES: Biography or interviews.

LEGAL AND SOCIAL CONCERNS: history, current status, possible outcomes, importance.

IDEAS: Essays, "Op Ed" Pieces, Personal Testimony.

(To be useful, "idea" pieces need more fact & observation — less opinion & reaction.)

CRAFTS AND SKILLS: "Merit badge" stuff, woodworking,

knot tying, braiding, first aid, etc.

In fact, almost anything touching on BDSM, Fetish, Power Exchange, might be a successful article, so long as it meets the primary requirement of imparting some *new* information or creative inspiration to at least *some* readers.

SHORTER PIECES: We also buy "filler" pieces: humorous anecdotes, tips and hints, cartoons, media clips.

VIDEO AND PRODUCT REVIEWS: What Authors, Producers and Craftworkers have to say about themselves and their work is probably more useful, and more interesting to readers, than critique by us. We want product releases, and book and video previews, in which they describe their own work in their own words.

Since not every author wants to be his/her own reviewer, we will also be doing traditional reviews of material submitted, and will buy reviews from writers.

Work can be submitted typewritten, or as an ASCII file in PC or Mac format.

*ABOUT "SAFETY":

We assume that our readers are adults and that we, and they, reached maturity by not being "stupid or reckless." *The Guardian* focuses on the pleasure and sensual nature of BDSM and less on the dangers, perils and negatives of BDSM play. If there are some safety or health issues not readily apparent, they need to be included. But we will not belabor the obvious.

DEADLINES:

The next issue of *The Guardian* is #23, and will be ready for the printer the first week in October. If your piece misses the deadline, we will still be buying and paying as we go. In effect, we've got to worry about deadlines ... you can just work to your own schedule.

ARTWORK AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Artists and illustrators are invited to send samples of their work by way of self-introduction. Almost all illustration will be commissioned for particular articles. Possible cover art, photo-essays and folios will be considered on their own merits. We want to project enjoyment, respect, safe-and-sane practice, and consensuality — or at least *not* communicate the reverse.

We are *not* in the market for "pin-up" art, rigid bondage/genitorture studies or depictions of atrocities. Work can be submitted in MAC or WINDOWS disk formats. If photographs are accepted, we prefer to have the negative for proper reproduction — and, of course, Model Releases in keeping with the new law.

THE CLASSIFIEDS - Our Readers' Market

The *Sandmutopian Guardian* invites our readers to "take advantage of us," and place an ad here. If you have any goods or services that you want other *Guardian* readers to know about, such as some excess S/M gear that you may have "outgrown" or craftwork that you make yourself whether scene- or nonscene-related.

We will publish ads from readers who are scene professionals and who run phone sex services, within the same line limits as other advertisers. However, we will *not* knowingly accept advertising for goods or services that are illegal.

Personal Ads are also appropriate to the Classifieds. But please supply your own post office box or mail drop. We do not have the facilities or the staff to do mail forwarding at this time. We will not publish phone numbers in personal ads, but will for commercial or professional ads.

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sought by gentlemanly, Nor.CA top. If you are a WF who needs discreet, caring BDSM, write me with confidence. Married OK. Dominic, POBox 2966 Santa Rosa CA 95405 23

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The Rules of the Game

by Tamar Kay

So you're trying to make a d/s relationship work. You've read all the books and now you have your checklist of what to do, starting with talking with your partner until there are no more uncertainties. So you talk, you spend time ironing out the bumps, then more time checking and renegotiating. Before you know it, all you're doing is talking!

Or you're at the other end of the spectrum. You feel you know the d/s stuff at a gut level and know how it ought to work, so you don't bother reading more than the basics. You dive right in. For a while the water feels fine. Then suddenly it all falls apart. What happened?

Communication is essential. But communication is not just about words. Talk alone cannot tell you everything you need to know about a relationship. Talk is a good starting place to get on your path while keeping your respective goals as well-aligned as possible, meaning that you both want the same sorts of things. You go off to hunt down those things together.

Together. That's a point some d/s couples miss. After all, if she's the dominant, shouldn't *she* be running the show? If he's the submissive, shouldn't he simply be doing what he's told? Isn't that what d/s is all about? Aren't those the "rules" of the game? Ah, yes. The rules of the game.

You may have heard that it's really the bottom who runs the show, that the top is really the one doing the giving. Or perhaps you've heard that a real slave doesn't have his own needs, but only lives to serve his master.

There are lots of different terms, different value systems, different rules. How does this "game" work, anyway? Who says how things are supposed to be?

Those of us who have been in the scene for a bunch of years tend to be seen as experts. Somehow just surviving as long as we have makes us the elders of the village, and the younger ones come and listen with rapt attention to every word we speak. Now, in my role, I'm going to get up on this large soapbox over here, and tell you what all this stuff is about. So listen carefully!

It's whatever you decide it's about!

Maybe it's about power, personal and erotic, and how that erotic spark of power can move between you and someone else and come alive. Maybe it's about an ideal of surrender, to another person or to a higher power, whatever moves you. Maybe it's simply about the sensuality of pain and the places it can take you. Maybe it's about acting out a fantasy. Maybe it's about the leather itself, about the feel of a strap across your back, hot then warm, tingling, wondering when the next one will come.

It's about you, *your* desire, *your* personal responsibility. It's about the reasons you came to the scene in the first place. We are all involved in the scene for different reasons, sometimes very different reasons. Whether you go to every event dressed in dead cow and loops of iron or you only read this magazine every so often, you are doing so because something drew you here, something that intrigued you enough to make you step forward.

That desire is your touchstone, and it is on that touchstone that you must build the rules of your own game.

We who write about the leather scene are often asked to draw conclusions and offer guidelines. We say things like, "Be safe, sane and consensual." We say, "Never let someone tie you up whom you don't know," and, "Always use a safeword." All this is good advice, even excellent advice. But every day out there responsible players are rejecting these rules and doing very well for themselves, thank you very much.

Blasphemous? Yes. But true. The rules of the game in the leather scene are really the same rules you get in life. For me, this implies other rules, too:

1. Be accountable for your words and actions.
2. Try not to damage anyone.
3. Try to leave things better than you found them.

The leather scene is a subculture. Like in any subculture, it's a good idea to know the rules before you break them, so try to do that. Learn as much as you can. Learn what others think it means to be responsible, not only for themselves, but for those around them.

By and large we leather folk are pretty much the same as other folk. We pay bills, we walk the dog, we get colds, we read the comics. So when it comes to the rules of our game, ask around. Everyone has his or

her own set. Find out what other people say. Watch what they do. Read books and articles. Go to meetings and listen to lectures. And all the while, think. What makes sense? What doesn't? Ideas — rules — should be treated like sex: don't swallow anything without a careful examination and a sufficient number of protective barriers.

You'll get lots of answers about what it means to be in the scene, to be a dominant and not a top, what a master is, how a collar changes a relationship, and so on. Like most communities, we are very fond of our labels, but there is more discussion over them than there is consensus. There are experts everywhere. You can't help but trip over them. So make good use of them.

A wise friend once told me, "The scene should work for you, not the other way around." Remember your touchstone. Ask yourself what draws you to the scene in the first place. Remember that you are here out of choice. Because somehow it moves you. Guide yourself on your own search for the game you want to play, for your own value system or rules that you want to follow.

At the same time, find people with whom you can check your ideas. Every person you talk to can be a source of wisdom. Keep in mind that the rules and roles of the leather scene are not chiseled in stone. My wise friend also said this: "The participants define the modern scene, which is an organic collection of people whose needs and desires only rarely fit into the gestalt of Sara Adamson's *Marketplace* or the gay biker scene of the 50's. It is a set of experiences intermingled with fantasies and ideals, but it is the experiences themselves that form the wisdom within the overall scene."

Certainly many of the leather scene's rules are quite useful ones. Some are intended to keep you alive and healthy — good goals to have if you want to play again tomorrow. But they are a collection of opinions, a bundle of common wisdom, and they may or may not fit you.

When you and your partner are diving into this together, try to see that you both are diving into the same pool, that you intend to play the same game and with the same rules.

It's easy to get the impression that there is a set way things that things Should Be Done. But that's the sort of assumption that can ruin a d/s relationship. **There is no one way to do things. There is no one set of right answers and no one set of correct terms of behaviors. There are as many games as there are people to play them.**

See how it plays for you.

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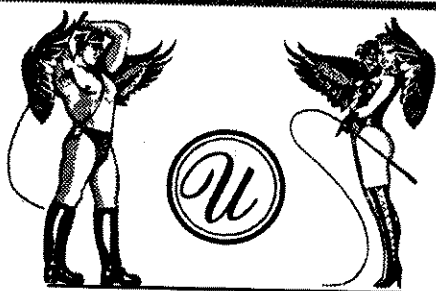
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